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WEEKLY

3-9 April 1986

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send 4 p

Concern grows over long software delays

CONCERN is growing among software companies, retailers and consumers about the large number of computer releases being severely delayed, often after being heavily advertised in the press.

Well-known companies such as Ocean (with *Superbowl* - Spectrum - *Knight Rider*, *Street Hawk*, *Batman* and

V), Melbourne House (*Asterix*, *Whitbread Yacht Race*), Firebird (*The Comet Game*), US Gold (two *Ultimate* titles and *Legend of the Amazon Women*) and Quicksilver (*Max Headroom*) are all behind schedule for long-awaited titles.

Ocean's five titles were all due to be released before

Easter. As Ocean plans to release about 60 new products this year alone, a heavy backlog is being created.

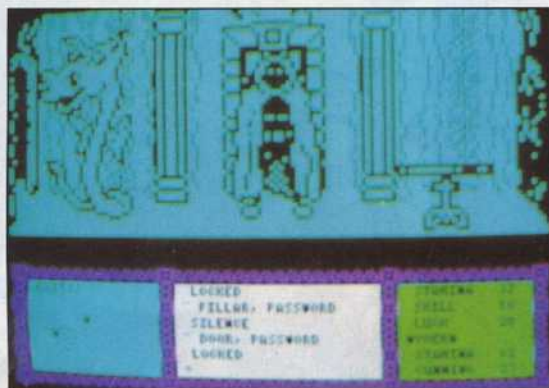
"The problem is only partly because of the number of titles," said Ocean's managing director Jon Woods. "The Spectrum version of *Superbowl* is now out, but I have no news on *Knight Rider* or

Street Hawk - they're not finished. *Batman* is completed, and will appear soon, V will be out this week."

All these titles have been promoted in advertisements by Ocean; *Knight Rider* since December 1985.

As for Melbourne House's *Asterix*: "We've postponed it

continued on page 4 ►



HEAVY on the Magick, the innovative new animated role playing adventure from Gargoyle Games is close to completion.

The game is based on the well-known Dungeons and Dragons format, but each event in the game is illustrated graphically.

Gargoyle has created graphic techniques which have enabled it to incorporate 250 rooms and a variety

of animated monsters.

In true D&D fashion, the player can invoke a wide range of spells throughout the play. Success is also partly determined by your skill/stamina rating. See this week's New Releases for a more detailed look.

Heavy on the Magick will be released within the next three weeks at £9.95 on the Spectrum. Amstrad and Commodore versions will follow.



THIS WEEK'S NEWS

- Apple dismisses Amiga and ST threat as profits triple
- Amiga price reduced in US
- Spectrum 128 incompatibility - the numbers grow

INSIDE ► NEW LOW-COST 120D CITIZEN PRINTER REVIEWED—P9

QUEST PROBE

FEATURING

THE
**HUMAN
TORCH**

AND
THE

THING



by **SCOTT ADAMS**
with art by
**RON WILSON AND
JOE SINNOTT**

Can you control the awesome powers of two Marvel Super Heroes at the same time, and rescue Alicia Masters from the grip of the evil Dr. Doom? In this the third of the highly acclaimed Questprobe series, written by Scott Adams, the undisputed master of the art of adventure writing, you have to control both The Thing and The Human Torch in their mission, set by the Chief Examiner, to rescue Alicia Masters from the evil terror of Dr. Doom.

All American
ADVENTURES

CBM 64	DISK £14.95	CASS. £9.95
AMSTRAD	DISK £14.95	CASS. £9.95
SPECTRUM 48K		CASS. £9.95
ATARI	DISK ONLY £14.95	
BBC/ELECTRON (TEXT ONLY)	CASS. ONLY £7.95	

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EDITORIAL

The problem of delayed software releases is hardly a new one. It's every bit as well-known and exasperating as that computing cliché, the delayed micro launch. What is worrying about the current spate of postponements and excuses is that everyone seems to agree that the delays are getting worse.

This Easter we reached a point where most of the country's top software companies were fighting a losing battle to release their products exactly one week before the Easter holidays. Most will end up not reaching the shops until some time after. In doing so, they have left the opportunity for sales open to products like Gremlin's *Way of the Tiger* and Hewson's *Uridium*, whose companies were sensible enough to give themselves a bit of leeway.

The companies concerned seem to be convinced that there is a glittering "Easter market" (say, a slightly poorer relation of the Christmas market), where a strongly advertised title will do wonders for company profits.

I remain doubtful, particularly when these products miss Easter by a good week, all appear together in a bunch, and compete together

well after the scheduled time.

The other worrying point, and probably more important, is an ethical one. Many products are advertised well in advance of their release date.

Consumers become frustrated if a product, advertised as available, is nowhere in sight. It is surely reasonable to expect an advertised product, whether a computer game, record, microwave oven, or garden spade, to be available then, unless of course the advertisement says "available soon", or similar.

Of course, there are a large number of threads to pull together in the production of a software title: storyboards, programmers, designers, artists, typesetters, blank tape manufacturers, duplicators, distributors... (the list is endless) all need to be co-ordinated. It would be asking the impossible for every release date to be made.

But one thing is certain, delays hurt everyone. The software companies lose money and credibility, the distributors likewise, the retailers lose money and gain angry customers and the consumers lose interest.

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Computer Trade Association Magazine of the Year

ABC

Commodore drops US Amiga price

COMMODORE has just begun a special promotional offer on the Amiga - in the US. Until May 31, the Amiga will retail at \$1295 (about £900), for a package comprising the 256K, single disc computer and a colour monitor. This is \$500 less than its previous price.

"Our intention is to rapidly build up the hardware base - there is now a lot of software available for the Amiga. As

we build up the owner base, so more companies will write for the machine," said Paul Lazovick, of Commodore International.

Lazovick estimated the Amiga's software base at over 100 titles, with 400 more being currently written.

He denied that the drop in price was in order to compete directly with Atari, whose 1040 STF sells for just under \$1000 (about £700). "I

can't say that the move is to compete - the Atari is not a strong competitor," he said.

It is possible that this offer may become permanent if it is successful. "I can't project what will happen," Lazovick continued. "At the moment it is scheduled to finish at the end of May."

Unfortunately, this move in the US will not help to reduce the introductory price of the UK's \$12K Amiga at £1500.

Apple dismisses Amiga and ST threat

APPLE is alive and kicking - and unimpressed by any threat to the Mac posed by Amiga and Atari's ST.

Apple's chairman, John Sculley, in Cambridge for the first conference of the Apple University Consortium, delivered this confident message following the announcement of Apple's financial results in the three months to March 28.

Profits have more than tripled over the comparable

period in 1985 to \$32 million (about £21 million), a performance in the computer field matched only by Amstrad's excellent results announced in February.

The current picture contrasts sharply with the situation six months ago during the highly acrimonious departure of founder Steve Jobs.

Sculley dismissed competition from the ST and Amiga,

saying that the future of mainstream personal computing lay in two architectures - the IBM PC and the Macintosh. He quoted software developers, including world leader Microsoft, as denying support to the new machines and said, "We know there's going to be very little development."

In fact, both Commodore and Atari themselves have lent support to this view, Commodore announcing an IBM emulator at the Amiga's launch, while Atari has introduced a CP/M emulator and announced an IBM emulator.

Oddly enough, Apple-watchers in the US are predicting an upgrade of the Apple II series as an answer to the Amiga/ST thrust. The *San Francisco Examiner* says the new machine will include a 16-bit processor and offer Apple II compatibility by including a IIc on a single chip. Pricing should be under \$1,000 and a launch is expected in September.

Meanwhile, at Cambridge, attention was focused on Apple's moves in the education field. The three-day conference showed that Apple is serious about this market.

More than 200 delegates from universities in 37 countries attended to appraise the current role of the Macintosh as an educational machine. Hundreds of software packages are available, most developed by the universities and much of it comfortably up to commercial standard.

Spectrum 128 incompatibility - more details

MAIL order software dealer Speedysoft has compiled a list of Spectrum titles it has tested (71 in all) for compatibility with the Spectrum 128.

So far, Speedysoft claims that the following programs, in their current form will not work on the Spectrum 128: *Alien 8* (Ultimate), *Elite* (Firebird), *Enigma Force* (Beyond), *Fairlight* (The Edge), *Four Adventures* (Global), *Hypersports* (Imagine), *Impossible Mission* (US Gold), *Knight Lore* (Ultimate), *Movie* (Imagine), *Laser Basic* (Ocean), *Laser Compiler* (Ocean), *Macadam Bumper* (PSS), *Nick Faldo's Open* (Mind Games), *Nightshade* (Ultimate), *Now Games*, *Now Games 2* (Virgin), *Steve Davis Snooker* (CDS), *Spitfire 40* (Mirrorsoft), *Swords and Sorcery* (PSS), *Their Finest Hour* (CCS), *They Sold a Million* (Hit Squad), *Think!* (Ariola-



Alien 8 - not 128 compatible

soft), *Tomahawk* (DI), *Waterloo* (Lothlorien), *Winter Games* (US Gold) and *Way of the Tiger* (Gremlin).

Speedysoft stresses that it has not tested every Spectrum program ever released. The list refers to current versions; many software houses are working on 128 versions of previously non-compatible games.

Further information from Speedysoft, 37 Church Road, London SW13 (01-846 9353).

Amstrad show alteration

DATABASE Exhibitions has changed the date of the next Amstrad Computer Show in London. The show will now be held, still at the Novotel venue, on June 13, 14 and 15.

Database claims the alteration is due to "overwhelming demand" and that the show will now take up double the floor space previously allocated.

Software delays

◀ continued from page 1

until June," said Paula Byrne. But the Whitbread yachting simulation has been cancelled.

Firebird's *Comet Game*, due to coincide with the space probe Giotto encountering Halley's Comet, has also only just appeared. "We had problems with duplication," said Firebird's Phil Pratt. "Delays are a problem - I wish I knew the solution."

US Gold is encountering problems with its titles *Ultimate*, *Pentagram* and *Cyberun*. But the company's general manager, Tim Chaney, said this was not a delay, although the games were originally due to be released in February. "It's simply a question of when the market is right. We need to space our releases out. *Cyberun* should be out in the second week of April and *Pentagram* soon after that."

Delays have occurred, however, on *Legend of the*

Amazon Women: "We had to send the Commodore version back for more work on it."

Max Headroom, from Quicksilver, is another casualty. "There were a couple of hold-ups, and a delay of one day at one end can mean a week at the other," said Quicksilver's Jane Smith. *Max* should be out this week.

However, distributors, who deliver the products to the shops, are extremely concerned, and say the problem is increasing.

Dave Cahill, buyer at Micro Dealer, commented, "It causes great problems: Instead of a steady progression of titles, you're getting the whole batch at once; this makes a limited market and everyone sells less. The situation has got much worse recently."

For the retailers, John Greengrass of Boots, said, "It's been a perpetual problem - software houses are very keen to get publicity and then they run into development problems."

Off the Hook compilation out now

OFF the Hook, the charity compilation tape in aid of the Princes Trust, is now on sale for the Spectrum and Commodore machines at £6.99.

"By the end of the first week, I would expect to have shipped 20,000 units," said Rod Cousens, organiser of the *Off the Hook* appeal.

Colossal title from Level 9

IN addition to its forthcoming *Price of Magic*, Level 9 will also launch its biggest adventure at the end of May.

Called *Colossal Trilogy*, it is a version of the original mainframe *Colossal Adventure*, with graphics added, extra text and a full sentence parser. Available on disc for the PCW 8256 and Atari ST, it will also be released on microdrive for the Sinclair QL.

Level 9 plans to bring out *Colossal Trilogy* at £19.95.

Unfortunately, Cousens was unable to get Pete Townshend, the former Who guitarist, to endorse the tape with an audio message, but he is still hoping he will participate in the appeal, to raise funds to help drug addict rehabilitation.

"Now I'm working on getting versions out for the Amstrad, Atari, BBC and C16 - I'm about 80% through the task," said Cousens.

Melbourne's latest

MELBOURNE House's next release is scheduled for the end of April - a text and graphic adventure entitled *Red Hawk*.

The game features cartoon-style graphics in the form of a comic strip, and tells the story of Kevin, "a sort of Superman in reverse", according to Melbourne House's Paula Byrne.

The company plans to release *Red Hawk* simultaneously on Spectrum, Commodore 64 and Amstrad machines at £8.95.

Monitor interface for Commodore 128

CASCADE Games has come to the rescue of new Commodore 128 owners who also possess a Microvitec monitor.

Micro vacuum cleaner

IF your computer is looking a bit dusty, the Mini-Vac may be the answer.

Mini-Vac is a battery operated, hand-held vacuum cleaner, about the size of a hair dryer, with a small dust-

Cascade has developed an interface, which can provide an 80 column RGB display for the C128, via the RGB TTL input used on most Microvitec models, including the 1431 dual model monitor. Users will be able to switch between using 40 columns on the Commodore 64 to both 40 and 80 columns on the 128.

The interface will cost £19.95. Details from Cascade at Suite 4, 1-3 Haywra Crescent, Harrogate, North Yorkshire (0423 504526).



bag and two pipes and brushes.

Manufacturer Authenticity says the Mini-Vac is not just for micros, but also camera lenses, hi-fi systems and video equipment.

The Mini-Vac will cost £11.95. More details from PO Box 34E, Worcester Park, Surrey (01-337 3352).

PCW 8256 Chess

AMSTRAD's software department, Amsoft, will release *Cyrus II Chess* for the PCW 8256 and 8512 machines next week under its Amsoft Gold label.

Cyrus II Chess offers 12 playing levels, and it will also play against itself. You may play the game in either 2D or 3D, and can print out screens at any stage, or a complete record of a particular game.

Cyrus II Chess for the PCW machines will cost £13.95.

N.N.N.NINETEEN

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QL enthusiasts

Myself and a handful of other QL enthusiasts have got together to form the Mid-Cheshire QL User Group. We intend to meet fortnightly in Crewe, and would like to hear from any prospective members.

I would be grateful if you could publish my full name, address and telephone number, so that anyone interested can write or phone for further details.

D E Whittick
72 South Street
Crewe
Cheshire
Tel: (0270) 255753

A vendetta?

I refer to Mr Hartley's letter, Vol 5 No 10, in which he states that your criticism of the BBC Master Series was unjustified.

In the same issue I noticed that the Peek & Poke column also contained derogatory references towards the Acorn Electron. It stated that "it offers little in the way of cheap upgrade potential" and there is no "vast software base" available.

This is complete and utter nonsense. If your writer took the time to fully investigate the software and expansion potential of the Electron, he would discover, four DFSs and Advanced Computer Products forthcoming APS interface, giving enhanced BBC compatibility, offering a User Port, 1 Mgz Bus and the Tube, allowing Acorn's 6502 and Z80 second processors to be attached. Rom expansion boards, a communications package, speech synthesiser, touch tablet, trackball, satellite comms and even a Winchester hard disc drive. These are just a few of the peripherals, readily available to the Electron user, all at prices equivalent to similar systems currently on the market.

As far as software and

firmware is concerned, there is a multiplicity of serious applications firmware available and the majority of titles currently being released for the BBC also have an Electron counterpart. *Beach Head*, *Citadel*, *Repton 2* and *Karate Combat* are just some of the very latest titles to appear from quality software houses such as US Gold and Superior Software.

The Electron is very much alive and every month sees new life breathed into it. The scathing criticism applied to the Electron and the BBC Master Series leads me to believe that *Popular* is conducting some kind of petty vendetta against Acorn, which can only do irreparable damage to a company in the forefront of the British micro-computing industry.

Stuart Low
Alloa
Scotland

Joystick details

I have recently bought a Kempston type interface and joystick for my 48K Spectrum. While this works well on appropriate commercially available games, I have been unable to find any useful information on how to use this equipment in my own programs.

Could anybody please supply me with details of how to read and include the joystick inputs, instead of the *Inkey* commands for up, down, left, right and fire?

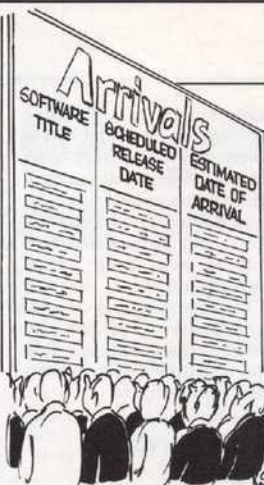
K Cockburn
Hall Lane
Houghton-le-Spring
Tyne and Wear

In business

Further to the letter which appeared in *Popular*, 5 March, in the Arcade Avenue section, I would like to take this opportunity to straighten the record.

The reader in question was looking for advice on how to complete *Chuckie Egg II* from A 'n' F Software. The reader appears to be of the opinion that A 'n' F Software have "gone out of business".

Indeed one of our telephone lines has been converted to a mail order and queries number and this



should alleviate any further difficulties. I would ask everyone to please note that A 'n' F Software are fully operational from their normal address at: Unit 8, Canalside Ind Estate, Woodbine Street East, Rochdale, Lancashire,

and can be contacted at any time on: 0706 341111.

If your reader would therefore call us, we will do all we can to help.

A 'n' F Software

Not approved

I noticed with interest your hardware article in Vol 5, No 8. You state that Modem House's Voyager 7 is "not yet fully approved, a familiar story of red tape and backlogs".

I feel I should mention that the non-approval of the Voyager 7 has little to do with red tape and backlogs; in fact, Modem House has not even applied for approval of this modem.

I hope this will help paint a truer picture of the situation in respect of this modem.

Malcolm Clifton
Office of Telecommunications

The Gallup Charts take an Easter break this week.

Readers' Chart No 68

1 (1)	Elite (Spectrum/C64/Amstrad/BBC)	Acornsoft/Firebird
2 (4)	Movie (Spectrum)	Imagine
3 (5)	Lord of the Rings (Spectrum/C64/Amstrad)	Melbourne House
4 (2)	Yie Ar Kung Fu (Spectrum/C64/Amstrad/BBC)	Imagine
5 (10)	Uridium (C64)	Hewson
6 (9)	Swords and Sorcery (Spectrum/Amstrad)	PSS
7 (3)	Commando (Spectrum/C64/C16)	Elite
8 (7)	Spellbound (Spectrum/Amstrad)	Mastertronic
9 (6)	Winter Games (Spectrum/C64/Amstrad)	Epyx/US Gold
10 (-)	FA Cup Football (Spectrum/Amstrad)	Virgin

Winning Phrase No 68: "Andy'n'Fergie make it - oo!", from A Newby, of Harrogate, North Yorks, who wins £25. An honourable mention goes to M G Crawford, also of Harrogate, and with the same theme in mind (everyone wrote anagrams about That Couple this week), for, "Andy met Fergie - Koo calm".

Now voting on week 70 - £25 to win

Each week *Popular* is compiling its own special software top ten chart - compiled by YOU.

And each week we will send £25 to the person who sends in, with their chart votes, the most original (witty, neat or clever - but never rude) phrase or sentence made up from the letters (you don't have to use them all) in the titles of the top three programs in this week's Readers' Chart, published above.

You can still vote in the chart without making up a slogan - but you won't be in with a chance of winning the prize.

All you have to do is fill in the form below (or copy it out if you don't want to damage your magazine) and send it off to: Top 10, *Popular Computing Weekly*, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2H 7PP.

Voting for Week 70 closes at 2pm on Wednesday April 9, 1986. Entries received after that time will not be eligible for inclusion in that week's voting. The judges decision is final. Only one entry per individual per week will be allowed.

Name	My top 3: Voting Week 70
Address	1.....
.....	2.....
.....	3.....
My phrase is:	

CORRECTION

If you're thinking of ringing up the CCCBB (Calne Computer Club Bulletin Board) please note that the correct number is 0249 817077.

GAME

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Q. What is Game Killer?

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Q. Sounds difficult.

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Q. You mean I can play my games all the way to the end.
I don't believe it!

A. Yes – incredible but true! It works on all those thousands of games with sprite collision.

Q. Sounds like science fiction! I suppose it's available in 2001.

A. It's here now!

Q. I'll believe it when I see it!

A. Exactly, so why don't you go to your local computer shop.

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Enquiries to **Robtek** (formerly known as Robcom) Ltd,
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for the C128



Book 1: Starting Basic

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Price: £5.95 ISBN 0 907792 72 3

Book 2: Advanced Programming

This book is intended for the reader who already knows the elements of BASIC and wants to make the Commodore 128 work for its living. Much can be accomplished on the C128 without knowledge of machine code, and this book fully stretches the abilities of the C128's superior BASIC.

Price: £5.95 ISBN 1 85181 034 X
(Publication date: May 1986)

3D Graphics Drawing Board for the C64 and C128

This software package allows you to create, alter and combine 3D images on the screen. This easy-to-use program is a breakthrough in graphics software - the 3D perspective images can be easily manipulated using the zoom, rotate, scale, stretch and move options. Hidden line removal adds further realism and the finished designs can be saved permanently to disc or printer.

Prices: C64 - £14.95 (disc only)

ISBN 1 85181 028 5

C128 - £14.95 (disc only)

ISBN 1 85181 029 3

C128 Assembly Language Course

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THE STORY SO FAR...

Doctor Who has been despatched by the Time Lords to the Rjan mineworking complex to regain the plans to the TIRU (Time Instant Replay Unit) and thwart the Master's plans to control the Universe. Having materialised in the mine, visited the nearest Cryogenic Sleep Chamber, got the Pick-axe and programmed the Splinx to distract the Madrag, he has made good his escape towards the central lift system, avoiding the controllers and picking up one or two more objects 'en-route'.

DR. WHO
PART TWO

To the right of the lift shaft lies the Reactor Area. Thinks.. "Could be useful to put the reactor out of action!" A quick inspection, however, discovers a rather active Controller. A sortie up and down in the lift reveals a vast complex above the surface containing the Factory, Construction, Greenhouse, Security, Escape Pod, Armoury and several un-mapped areas. Monorails go left and right. The Doctor cannot enter most of these areas as he has yet to obtain the Pass Card.

The Doctor reviews the list of objects he may find:— Packing Case, Pick, Detonator, Explosives, Memory Capsule, Hatch, Escape Pod Activator, Cloth, Crystal, Pass Card, Electronic Spanner, Stool, Heatonite Ore, Anti-gravity mat, Oxygen bottle. There could be others!

He decides to investigate the Factory Area which is un-protected. Conveyor Belts, ventilation shafts, inspection ladders. Two items of special interest... an Electronic Spanner and a number of PCB's which spell START. Food for thought?

SEE THIS AREA FOR FURTHER REVELATIONS

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Chroma

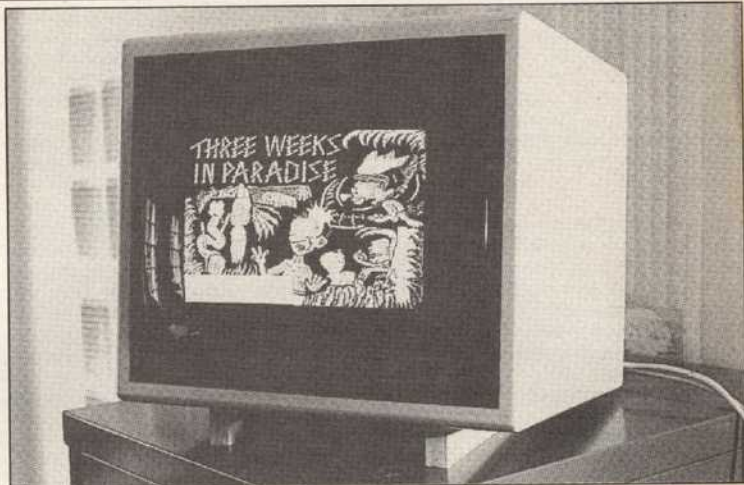
Product Chroma 1 Monitor Micro Spectrum 128/QL (tested), Spectrum 48K (with converter: Amstrad, BBC, Atari, Commodore 128 **Price** £229.95 (introductory price) **Supplier** Chromagraphics, 135 Cliff Road, Hornsea, N. Humberside HU18 9SZ.

My first impression of this monitor was amazement. It's housed in a wooden case! A type of chipboard, to be precise, with a spray painted finish. Chromagraphics supplies the monitor in a number of colours to suit your micro: Sinclair black, Acorn yellow, or pale grey for Atari and Commodore 128.

Chromagraphics also plans to make a metal cased version (more expensive) for those wanting a shielded box.

The Chroma 1 has an on/off switch and brightness controls, plus, on my model, an eight hole plug suitable for the Spectrum or QL socket. Other versions come with relevant connections and there is promise of a 48K Spectrum model, with interface for £28.95.

Plugging in gives favourable results. Chroma 1 gives a markedly better image than the TV/monitor I normally use. The picture was crisp and clear but –



and it's a big but – there is no sound. To enjoy the full capabilities of the new Spectrum, you'll need connections to a separate amplifier which are not satisfactorily explained in the 128 manual. Chromagraphics is, again, planning a version with sound output.

I'd advise careful thought before buying this version, even at the initially competitive price. Can you justify the

cost and trouble of arranging external amplification just to have that quality of picture if your main interest is games? Probably not. However, if you use your micro for tasks where fine definition is imperative, then it could well suit you.

No price has yet been fixed for the more enhanced versions, but they may well be worth waiting for.

John Minson

Citizen 120D

Product Citizen 120D dot-matrix printer Micro Any with Centronics output; interfaces for RS232 and CBM serial also available **Price** £235 **Supplier** Citizen Europe Ltd, Wellington House, 4/10 Cowley Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 2XW, Tel 0895 72621

There are two fields in which a printer must appeal to the enthusiastic home user to become successful – facilities, economy and ease of use ... three fields in which a printer

Major manufacturers have recently realised the value of a budget printer designed to appeal to the mass market. In some cases this realisation leads to shortcuts in quality (thermal printing, lack of font options and so on), but with the 120D there seems to be no such limitation.

The 120D is certainly good enough for the home user wishing to produce program listings and fair quality correspondence, and may well be sufficient for a small business. In order to make it compatible with the wide range of micros this would involve, the 120D has a port in the righthand side which accepts an interface cartridge specific to the computer you own.

The 120D is compact – 386 × 240 × 90mm, lightweight, and seems well-made. A number of the design features make it ideal for the home user; it has a tractor-feed included, with continuous paper feed from the lower rear to save space.

Print speed is fair, at 120 cps in normal mode or 25 cps in near-letter quality mode. There is also a large number of font options; Pica or Elite, expanded, compressed, or both. The 9 × 9 dot matrix print head allows underlining, and full IBM or Commodore graphics printing.

The ribbon, which has a life expectancy of two million characters (we didn't test this!) is of the disposable cartridge variety and is easy to replace.

The front panel controls include on-

line, form feed/sheet load, and line feed. LEDs indicate power on, paper out, and ready. There's a built-in 4K buffer.

The tractor feed clips easily over the platen, and the platen knob is on the right-hand side. In front of it is the all-important interface cartridge slot. Using a standard Centronics cartridge, you can of course use any micro equipped with a Centronics interface. The 120D will emulate an Epson FX printer (1, 2 or 3), according to how you set the DIP switches inside the interface cartridge.

Users of Commodore micros with the company's non-standard serial output will be aware of the problems in using non-Commodore printers. In the case of the 120D, you will need a serial interface cartridge which connects to the micro with the usual CBM serial leads. However, this cartridge will not be available for a couple of months, so unless you already own a Centronics interface for the 64/128 you will have to wait.

The manual for the 120D is a very complete, ring-bound affair, which goes into fair detail about maintenance, programming and options, though it is a little sketchy on Commodore Basic printer commands.

In all the 120D, at £235, seems to offer an excellent alternative to bulky, expensive business printers or inexpensive but limited models. When the Commodore serial interface is launched it will probably compete well with the forthcoming CBM MPS-1000.

Chris Jenkins



must appeal – facilities, economy, ease of use and reliability ... four fields ... Oh well, suffice it to say that the newly-released Citizen 120D seems to have something to offer in every field.

Foresight

Program *Fourmost Adventures* **Micro** Spectrum/*Amstrad* **Price** £7.95 **Supplier** Global Software, PO Box 67, London SW11.

Any compilation of Adventures compiled by Tony Bridge must be worth taking a look at. The games are an unusual collection but it's easy to see why the selections have a place in this compilation.

The three adventures and one role playing game are very good value for money. The first, *Out Of The Shadows* is a typical role player with the usual assorted monsters to overcome. You are able to decide, at the beginning, which of six quests to take part in, then off you go to explore the area. If you have never played this type of game before it is a good introduction to the game.

Galaxias is one of Fergus McNeil's earlier *Quilled* adventures (later games were *Bored Of The Rings* and *Rob-in Of Sherlock*), in this game the idea is to visit various planets in search of a Crystal. Apart from the stencil-type text which takes a bit of getting used to, the game, overall, is very enjoyable with good location descriptions and reasonable graphics.

The Mural by Nic Ford finds you wondering along Neasden High Street when you are approached by a couple of guys wearing suspenders. Strange you may think but this game is certainly different from others I have played. The object is to find an obscene mural and paint over it. I don't know if the author intended it but there is a certain *Zorkish* feeling to the game.

The last game, and one that I particularly wanted to look at, unfortunately would not load, entitled *Project X - Micro Man*. From what I know of it, the adventure is not unlike *The Incredible Shrinking Man*.

In conclusion then, for any adventurer who likes variety this is an excellent package and represents good value.

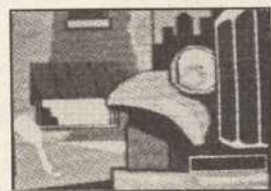
Roger Garrett



Da Boss

Program *Mugsy's Revenge* **Micro** CBM 64 **Price** £9.95 **Supplier** Melbourne House, 60 High Street, Hampton Wick, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT1 4DB.

Ok Mugsy dis is da lowdown on what's bin 'appening since yuv bin in da slammer, da Feds 'ave made booze illegal



so dis is a great chance for us ta clean up by smuggling some moonshine in from Canada, whadda ya tink boss?

You may have guessed that this is the follow up to the successful *Mugsy*. Having just been released from jail it's up to you to regain your rightful position as the underworld king. This involves buying barrels of booze at the right price, opening nightclubs, putting out 'contracts' on gangsters and keeping the police 'sweet'.

One of your loyal hoods will keep you informed of when to buy booze, nightclubs, enlist men etc, but it's up to you what decisions are made and making the wrong ones can be disastrous.

The game combines strategy with an arcade sequence, in which you get a chance to

blast away with your joystick. The game on first playing is entertaining enough, graphics are excellent, well defined and quickly drawn, the music reminds one of the roaring 20s era and tinkles along quite merrily. But, I don't think good graphics and jolly music will alter the fact that, after playing the game for a while, it does tend to get a bit stale. The management/strategy elements are fundamentally weak - as they were in *Mugsy*.

Granted, it's a great way of making the old *Kingdom* look good and I'm certain a lot of people will buy it on the strength of its graphics, my own feeling is that *Mugsy* should have been left in jail.

Roger Garrett



Knock out!

Program *King of the Ring* **Micro** Atari 8 bit **Price** £8.95 **Supplier** Gremlin Graphics, Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS

I suppose this can best be described as boxing's version of *Football Manager*. There you are, with your budding protégé eager to break into the big time, all he needs is a few good wins under his belt and it's a shot at the world title. So it's up to you as his manager and coach

to pick out the right fighters for your boy to go up against, know wot I mean Harry?

This is your big chance to prove that your're better than Mickey Duff when it comes to tactics and training (you get to choose various types) and then it's down to the fight itself. This takes the form of what looks like a couple of shadow boxers in outline, ducking and weaving and hitting, over eight rounds. All you can do is sit and watch whilst your boy either takes punishment or dishes it out. In between rounds you decide on whether to attack, defend or just play dirty. (which, I

must admit was my best ploy). If you feel that the fight is going well, you can elect to go for a KO option which is a gamble and could backfire by getting your boxer KO'd.

Choosing an opponent is interesting as you get a complete case history of each one and it's from this record that you can pick out a likely fall guy. It's nice to see some quality 8 bit Atari software being released now and Gremlin have made a good job with this one, I'm over the moon Harry!

Andy Moss



Team spirit

Program *Team Mate* **Micro** CBM 64/Atari **Price** £34.95 **Supplier** Team Mate, Debden Green, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 3LX.

This is a package from American software house Tri Micro and released here by Team Mate Software in Essex. It is a suite of four programs; Word Processor, Data Base, Graphic and Spreadsheet - integrated as a single system.

The Word Processor - has all the usual commands available - editing, variant margins, justifying, swapping or replacing blocks of text, etc.,

and the printer commands include centering, shadow or bold printing, super and subscript. The screen format is 80 column but, because your screen is only 40 columns wide, the program splits your text into two halves and by pressing F7 or F8 enables you to see the right and left halves respectively.

The Spreadsheet - consists of 50 rows and 17 columns giving you 850 cells to hold numbers of formulae; quite enough to work out budgets or taxation or even your mortgage repayments. Once again, screen size demands a splitting up of cells but a single key pressing scrolls neatly through the data.

The Graphics - include pie, bar and line charts which

although provide clear and concise diagrams, tend to look a little inferior when compared to say a graphics only utility.

Lastly comes the **Database** which allows you to store all sorts of information from mailing lists to house inventories!

You can hold up to 999 records with a maximum of 17 lines or 'Fields' for each.

All of these programs can be used in conjunction with each other and printed out using the Word Processor/Printer set up. There are some nice error trapping routines and a choice of 15 colours to suit your mood.

Andy Moss



Mixed bag

Program 30 Games Micro
Spectrum 48K Price £9.95
Supplier Argus Press Software Ltd, Liberty House, 222 Regent Street, London W1R 7DB.

Games, games, lovely games! Gather round because have I got games for you. Not ten. Not 20! Thirty! Count 'em.

There have been compendiums before but few like this; an inevitably mixed bag of the good, the bad and the repulsive, games you thought you'd never see the likes of again; relics and remains from computing prehistory (ie, four years ago) like a tied up *Battleships* game masquerading as a wargame, *Draughts* and a *Computer Cube*.

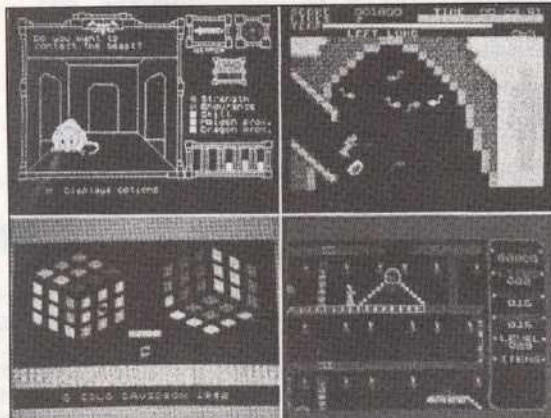
But while these are fillers, not thrillers, Argus have been able to draw on all the outposts of their surprisingly vast empire to produce some good stuff. Recent releases

like *Strontium Dog - the Killing* may not have gathered much respect at full price, but at just over 30p you can't grumble. And at this price *Fantastic Voyage* and *Mighty Magus* are definite bargains. It's also interesting to see how well a title like *CS* dominate the wargame market and *Antics* has lasted and even *Space Invaders* can provide a welcome respite from the sophistication of today's icon driven

wonders. I was also fascinated by *Dragonsbane*, a sort of predecessor to *Swords and Sorcery*.

30 Games provides a great selection of game types - a real lucky bag of style and quality. Unless you already have the best ones you won't go far wrong - a tape counter is vital though.

John Minson



Sea dog

Program Devil's Crown Micro
Spectrum 48K Price £1.99
Supplier Mastertronic Ltd, 8-10 Paul St, London EC2.

Pin back yer lug'oles for a narrative of nautical nastiness... It seems there was this pirate ship which found the Devil's Crown itself. But when these buccaneers decided to relieve Old Nick of his dentistry (Devil's Crown - geddit?) he turned nasty and sent them to a wat'ry grave and eternal oblivion.

That is until some programmer made a computer game of it, so it's shiver me timbers - and not surprising with weather like this - and scrape the barnacles off me bottom, for what 'e' as created is a sort of cut-price *Sorcery* for the HMS Spectrum. It's a game of guiding your portly little diver around, shooting up fishes and piratical ghosts and collecting things.

Every time you replace a flashing object with its equivalent you get another gem

from the Satanic tifer, and once they're replaced you're home and dry.

You'll need to collect the oxygen bottles unless you want to end up airless, and the pistols pack extra ammo so don't neglect them.

Well, it ain't the best graphics I've ever seen, with or

without a telescope, and it didn't seem too difficult at first, though it gets more tricky later. But for the price of just two dubbloons I reckon it be a jolly bargain, Rover.

John Minson



Mad house

Program Asylum Micro
CBM64/ATARI Price £9.95
Supplier All American Adventures, Unit 10 Parkway Industrial Centre, B/Ham.

Well my friend, it's finally happened, too many late nights solving adventures has turned you into a nervous wreck. Found wondering down a dimly lit street muttering inane statements like "Light the lamp and Drop the Orc" you find yourself, on waking up, in the local Asylum.

It was certainly easy getting in, but how to get out? Well in my case, if I had played this

game non-stop for 24 hours, I think I would still have been in there, or possibly in a real Asylum.

I must say that I found this 'adventure' to be totally boring. The object of the game is to escape back to reality, but this game is one vast maze where you simply wander around aimlessly, trying to open countless doors. To try and map the route is impossible, so you tend to find yourself going round in circles.

If you are one of those who love frustrating maze type games then this one is great, good graphics and plenty of walls to bang into, but me, well I'll stick to less frustrating adventures.

Roger Garrett



Well played

Program Tasword 3 Micro
Spectrum Price £16.50
Supplier Tasman, Springfield House, Udyde Terrace, Leeds LS2 9LN.

First thing first - three cheers to Tasman Software for having the courage to release this program on microdrive. I have always felt that Sinclair's controversial mass storage system, given decent support, would ultimately come up trumps (my drive and tapes have never let me down) and this release shows just what can be achieved with only one drive, let alone seven linked together.

A clear and concise manual comes with the package and is set out in such a way as to make finding a particular section simple; the key to a good word processor - simplicity of use. It's no good having to wade through pages and page of technical jargon to perform a fundamental exercise and *Tasword 3* has been designed to keep such hassles to a minimum. Word wrapping and justification are automatic (they can be turned off if required) and the movement of text left, right or centre is delightfully easy.

Blocks of text can be swapped, copied, inserted or deleted (as can single words) and all can be executed by at most two key presses. The program offers a main menu which is called up by pressing *Stop* and includes files for merging text, printing and tutoring. Any selection from this list will activate the microdrive and load in new data precisely like a standard disc drive operation. Tasman also offer a copy facility and recommend you keep your original and make a back-up which would become your master tape for normal use. This protects your *Tasword* program should a fault occur in your copy.

This package is the best WP release I've seen on the Spectrum and makes a mockery of the claim that the Spectrum is for games only.

Andy Moss



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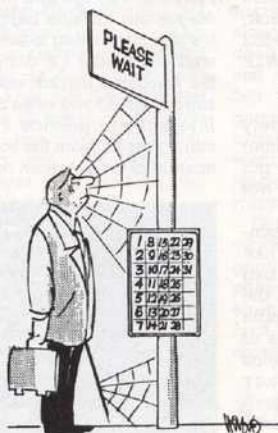
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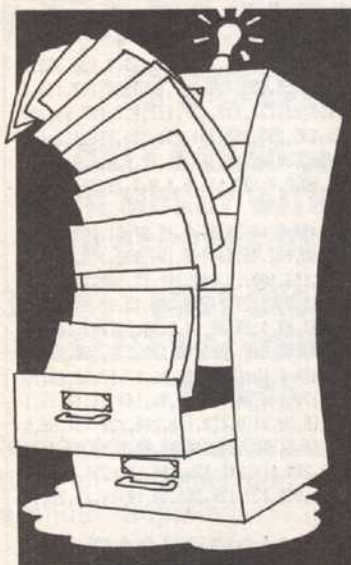


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TAROT

by David Muir

This week, the second and final part of the Tarot card listing. The program is fairly straightforward, apart from the graphics.

When a card is to be printed, a check is made if it is a suit card. If so, the character 255 is defined for the suit and printed where necessary on the face to make the number of 'pips' or once for a court card as a suit marker. If it is a court card then K, Q, N or P is also printed.

Trump and court card picture data starts in memory at 38000. There is a short (21-byte) machine code section at 39872. (The data for this is the last line of the program.) This simply uses LDIR to dump 72 bytes from the picture data area into the UDG area to fill out characters 246 to 254 (memory locations 37920-37991), prior to printing a string containing these characters (a8).

It is interesting that the screen can be

filled with different card pictures while using only 10 user-defined graphic characters in a present string.

There is little agreement amongst Tarot card fortune tellers as to the card meanings. I have tried to synthesise ideas from a number of sources, with the prime objective always to keep the program as short as possible. Readers can easily substitute their own ideas and expand the meanings. Interpretative data begins at line 510. There are two pieces of data for each card starting at 'The Fool'. Generally these give 'Good' and 'Bad' meanings... but some cards tend to be totally good or totally bad.

Once again, if all the typing seems beyond your abilities (or patience), then I can supply tape copies of the program at £1.50 each. Write to me, David Muir, at 78 Peverell Park Road, Peverell, Plymouth PL3 4ND.

590 DATA DEFEAT, HUMILIATION, ABANDONED STRUGGLE, LEAVING, TRICKERY, DECEIT, HELPLESSNESS, INDECISION, DESPAIR, MISERY, MATERIAL CALAMITY, DISRUPTION, NEW WEALTH, PRACTICAL PLAN, HARMONIOUS CHANGE, BALANCE, SKILL, CRAFTSMANSHIP, HOARDED WEALTH, MATERIAL GAIN, ROOTLESS

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610 DATA THE HERMIT, THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE, JUSTICE, THE HANGED MAN, DEATH, TEMPERANCE, THE DEVIL, THE BLASTED TOWER, THE STAR, THE MOON, THE SUN, LAST JUDGEMENT, THE WORLD
620 DATA HANDS, KING, CUPS, QUEEN, DAGGERS, KNIGHT, SHIELDS, PRINCESS, ACE, TWO, THREE, FOUR, FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT, NINE, TEN, BASIS, COVERS, CROSSES, FAR PAST, NEAR PAST, NEAR FUTURE, FAR FUTURE, FEARS, OTHERS FEEL, HOPES, OUTCOME

630 DATA 14, 10, 18, 14, 10, 15, 14, 19, 4, 10, 14, 2, 24, 10, 32, 19, 32, 13, 32, 7, 32, 1

640 SYMBOL 255, 224, 160, 240, 56, 28, 14, 4: RETURN

650 SYMBOL 255, 126, 129, 255, 126, 60, 24, 60: RETURN

660 SYMBOL 255, 3, 5, 74, 116, 40, 120, 108: RETURN

670 SYMBOL 255, 24, 102, 66, 153, 66, 102, 24: RETURN

680 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 4, 6, 7, 4, 3, 4, 6, 68, 236, 252, 252, 12, 196, 36, 228, 0, 34, 85, 77, 69, 65, 33, 19, 4, 5, 3, 4, 4, 2, 133, 204, 36, 36, 142, 19, 97, 131, 143, 63, 15, 6, 2, 1, 1, 3, 7, 7, 60,

56, 121, 249, 241, 243, 243, 227, 255, 255, 255, 255, 255, 255, 255

690 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 4, 6, 5, 4, 7, 3, 4, 6, 68, 236, 180, 4, 248, 252, 60, 252, 0, 34, 85, 77, 69, 65, 33, 19, 4, 5, 3, 6, 7, 7, 134, 204, 60, 60, 19, 0, 61, 253, 59, 55, 127, 15, 6, 2, 1, 1, 3, 7, 7, 60, 5, 6, 121, 249, 241, 243, 243, 227, 255, 255, 255, 255, 5, 255, 255, 255, 255

700 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 4, 6, 5, 4, 7, 7, 4, 6, 68, 236, 180, 4, 252, 252, 60, 236, 0, 34, 85, 77, 69, 65, 33, 19, 4, 5, 3, 2, 1, 3, 135, 206, 12, 24, 15, 0, 45, 219, 183, 111, 223, 15, 6, 2, 1, 1, 3, 7, 7, 60, 56, 121, 249, 241, 243, 243, 227, 255, 255, 255, 255, 255, 255, 255, 255, 255

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720 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1, 6, 0, 56, 68, 108, 84, 40, 255, 0, 0, 0, 0, 48, 200, 112, 192, 29, 38, 24, 0, 0, 0, 224, 158, 199, 68, 124, 127, 127, 97, 97, 225, 0, 0, 0, 128, 128, 128, 128, 192, 129, 131, 22, 5, 152, 135, 136, 145, 145, 192, 176, 200, 4, 248, 144, 63, 127, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 255, 255

730 DATA 64, 64, 248, 148, 242, 81, 81, 80, 0, 56, 68, 108, 84, 40, 215, 68, 0, 4, 26, 34, 92, 136, 8, 8, 23, 24, 0, 0, 255, 192, 231, 240, 41, 146, 146, 130, 255, 32, 246, 38, 232, 24, 224, 160, 255, 67, 2, 31, 15, 248, 223, 207, 204, 13, 13, 12, 13, 0, 255, 255, 130, 1, 255, 198, 131, 31, 251, 243, 51, 48, 4, 8, 48, 48

740 DATA 0, 0, 12, 15, 12, 13, 13, 15, 56, 124, 68, 109, 198, 215, 239, 255, 0, 0, 96, 224, 96, 96, 96, 224, 12, 12, 8, 9, 18, 20, 20, 29, 238, 198, 16, 57, 146, 130, 198, 255, 96, 96, 32, 32, 144, 80, 80, 12, 18, 20, 44, 37, 39, 39, 39, 63, 56, 16, 16, 215,

239, 255, 255, 255, 144, 80, 104, 72, 200, 200, 20, 0, 248

750 DATA 0, 39, 57, 46, 31, 32, 32, 32, 200, 56, 2, 32, 240, 8, 120, 136, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 33, 33, 65, 65, 130, 43, 74, 146, 112, 40, 8, 48, 16, 224, 64, 96, 0, 0, 16, 56, 16, 56, 68, 130, 166, 172, 243, 248, 254, 255, 255, 255, 48, 88, 156, 63, 121, 23, 1, 159, 235, 130, 130, 69, 185, 146, 130, 140, 240, 760 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 1, 1, 1, 1, 36, 90, 137, 133, 5, 0, 122, 122, 48, 0, 0, 0, 128, 128, 128, 128, 56, 124, 236, 198, 230, 115, 25, 8, 177, 129, 255, 129, 255, 0, 129, 195, 28, 62, 55, 99, 103, 206, 152, 1, 68, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1, 3, 102, 60, 24, 60, 102, 195, 1, 29, 0, 16, 0, 0, 0, 0, 128, 192

770 DATA 33, 51, 63, 63, 31, 16, 32, 33, 8, 152, 2, 48, 248, 240, 8, 232, 8, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 35, 34, 33, 2, 33, 26, 36, 66, 225, 240, 48, 8, 8, 112, 144, 8, 8, 136, 0, 16, 40, 68, 68, 40, 40, 40, 252, 191, 191, 2, 23, 239, 236, 243, 255, 112, 24, 252, 243, 205, 57, 249, 249, 40, 40, 40, 56, 196, 4, 4, 252

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800 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 255, 0, 0, 1, 0, 1, 62, 200, 127, 224, 240, 48, 184, 24, 144, 104, 136, 25, 5, 0, 31, 32, 48, 63, 62, 29, 144, 255, 255, 7, 3, 24, 9, 13, 182, 40, 200, 8, 248, 144, 16, 32, 64, 26, 27, 24, 11, 10, 5, 2, 1, 171, 27, 67, 27, 170, 180, 8, 2, 40, 96, 208, 200, 252, 0, 0, 0, 0

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WILD CARD

by R K Lowry

The term 'wild card' has entered computer jargon from card games. In some of these, the wild card or joker may be used to represent any card in the pack. Similarly, the wild card in computing is a character in a string which means any character from the character set. For example, if the symbol '%' is taken as the wild card, the string 's%n' is equivalent to 'sin', 'sun', 'sen', 's&n' or any other 3-character string in which 's' is the first character and 'n' the 3rd.

The single character wild card, though useful in certain applications, is somewhat limited. A more powerful wild card character is one which is defined as 'one or more characters'. If the character '*' is defined in this manner, the string 's*n' is now equivalent to countless strings: 'soon', 'spleen' and 'spoon' are but three examples.

What use are wild cards? The main application in mainframe operating systems is for convenience of file management. They are particularly useful if the file naming convention makes use of filename extensions, eg, fred.for;5, fred.obj;2, fred.exe;2. On VAX machines, the command 'delete fred.*;' would delete all three of these files which is a lot quicker than typing three separate commands.

At last we come to the QL. The Psion packages create files which have filename extensions. For example, if you save a document called 'fred' from Quill, the file generated is called 'fred.doc'. Consequently, a wild card facility has its uses for many QL owners. The program presented here is a wild card backup program. You type in a string containing wild card characters and the program copies all files which match from mdv1 to

mdv2. For example, if you have a cartridge containing a mixture of Quill and Archive files, and wish to copy only the Quill files, the string '*_doc' will do the trick.

The program is a vehicle for the string matching function `wcard`. This is a logical function with two string arguments. The first is a string containing wild cards and the second a string to be matched. If the strings are equivalent within the wild card convention % = any character, * = one or more characters, the function returns '1'. Otherwise it returns zero.

The only limitation on the use of wild card characters is that if the character '*' is used, the wild card characters must be separated by at least one character which is not a wild card.

For example, '%', '*', 'a*', '%a' and '%%' are all valid but '***', 'a*%' and 'f*%' are invalid.

```

100 REMARK **
110 REMARK ** Wild card backup (mdv1 to mdv2)
120 REMARK ** R.K. Lowry
130 REMARK **
140 REMARK ** Set up directory
150 REMARK **
160 OPEN_NEW #3,mdv2_rklzzzt
170 DIR #3,mdv1_
180 OPEN_IN #3,mdv2_rklzzzt
190 INPUT#3,a$:a$
200 REMARK **
210 REMARK ** Input wild card string
220 REMARK **
230 CLS:INPUT'Enter filename for backup':a$
240 REMARK **
250 REMARK **
260 REPEAT bkup
270 IF EOF (#3) THEN EXIT bkup
280 INPUT#3,b$
290 IF wcard (a$,b$) THEN
300 PRINT'Copying mdv1_':b$
310 COPY 'mdv1_&b$ TO 'mdv2_&b$
320 END IF
330 END REPEAT bkup
340 REMARK **
350 REMARK ** Close down directory
360 REMARK **
370 CLOSE#3:DELETE mdv2_rklzzzt
380 STOP
390 REMARK **
400 REMARK ** Logical Function wcard(a$,b$)
410 REMARK ** R.K. Lowry 30/12/85
420 REMARK ** Compares a string containing
430 REMARK ** wildcard characters (a$) with
440 REMARK ** an expanded string (b$). The function
450 REMARK ** returns 1 if the two strings
460 REMARK ** are equivalent. Otherwise 0
470 REMARK ** is returned
480 REMARK **
490 REMARK ** All variables are local
500 REMARK **
510 DEFINE FUNCTION wcard (a$,b$)
520 LOCAL i,p%,pmax%
530 REMARK **
540 REMARK ** Test for null strings
550 REMARK **
560 IF LEN(a$)=0 OR LEN(b$)=0 THEN RETURN 0
570 p%=1:pmax%=LEN(b$)
580 FOR i=1 TO LEN (a$)
590 IF p%>pmax% THEN RETURN 0
600 REMARK **
610 REMARK ** Wild card 'X'
620 REMARK **
630 IF a$(i)='X' THEN
640 p%=p%+1
650 END IF
660 REMARK **
670 REMARK ** Wild card '*'
680 REMARK **
690 IF a$(i)='*' THEN
700 IF i=LEN(a$) THEN RETURN 1
710 p%=p%+1
720 IF p%>pmax% THEN RETURN 0
730 REMARK **
740 REMARK ** Search for character
750 REMARK ** following wild card
760 REMARK **
770 REPEAT csearch
780 IF a$(i+1)=b$(p%) THEN EXIT csearch
790 p%=p%+1
800 IF p%>pmax% THEN RETURN 0
810 END REPEAT csearch
820 END IF
830 REMARK **
840 REMARK ** Character other than wild card
850 REMARK **
860 IF a$(i)<>'X' AND a$(i)<>'*' THEN
870 IF a$(i)<>b$(p%) THEN RETURN 0
880 p%=p%+1
890 END IF
900 NEXT i
910 REMARK **
920 REMARK ** Check for trailing characters
930 REMARK ** in b$
940 REMARK **
950 IF p%>pmax%+1 THEN RETURN 1:ELSE :RETURN 0
960 END DEFINE

```


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WILD WEST

by Andy Clarke

Use a joystick in Port One to play this Wild West Shootout. After the titles enter the number of players wishing to play. It helps if there are more than one as this game challenges player against player as each tries to beat the high score.

After all the name entering, you'll receive the message 'Git Ready' and the

player's name.

The scene is set in the Wild West and you have to shoot as many Indians as you can in one minute - (change value in Line 58 for a longer session.)

Move up and down the screen to get the Indian. To fire you must face him by knocking the joystick left or right. Then press 'Fire'. Sometimes you'll have to

fire more than once to kill an Indian.

When shot the Indian will whoop and disappear, only to reappear on another part of the screen. If you go off the top or bottom of the screen a little routine at Lines 52-54 will make him reappear at the bottom or the top respectively.

You score 100 points per Indian and should be looking for a score of 1200.

```

0 POKE56,48:CLR
1 DIMHS(10),HSK(10),NR(10)
2 REM*** GUNFIGHT / COM 64 ***
3 REM*** BY ANDREW CLARKE ***
4 REM*** (C) 1986 ***
5 GOSUB200
6 FORS=200TO211:FOROT=0TO62:POKE#64+T,0:NEXT:NEXT
7 FORT=0TO62:POKE211#64+T,0:IFT=230RT=31THENPOKE211#64+T,192
8 NEXT
9
10 FORS=200TO211:FOROT=0TO62:READA:POKE#64+T,A:NEXT:NEXT
11 CLR:V=53248:POKEV+39,2:POKEV+38,7:POKEV+37,0:POKEV+41,2:POKEV+40,1
12 POKE2040,200:POKE2041,211:GOSUB500:GOSUB204:POKEV+27,15
13 FORI=1TO10:HS(I)=0:HSK(I)=0:NEXT
14 POKEV+21,3:POKEV+33,8:POKEV+32,0
15 POKEV,150:V=100:POKEV+1,V:POKEV+26,5
16 SC=0:R=R+1:IFR=PL+1THEN90
17 GOSUB260:PRINT"*****GUNFIGHTER*****":HSK(R):POKEHIGHEST:HSK(1)
18 T1$="*****":GOSUB600:POKE2040,200
19 JS=PEEK(56321)
20 IFJS=254THENGOSUB100:V=V-4:K=0:GOSUB570
21 IFJS=253THENGOSUB104:V=V+4:K=0:GOSUB570
22 IFJS=247THENPOKE2040,207:K=1
23 IFJS=251THENPOKE2040,205:K=1
24 IFJS=239THENGOTO110
25 IFV249THENV=29
26 IFV29THENV=249
27
28 PRINT"*****SCORE*****":SC:TIME=TIME/MID$(T1$,4,1):M=0:RIGHT$(T1$,2)
29 IFVLT(110)>100THENGOSUB580:GOTO70
30 POKEV+1,V:POKEHF,0:GOTO40
31 POKE2040,208:GOSUB590:PRINT"*****":HSK(R):SCORED:SC:GOSUB550
32 GOSUB350:IFTZ=1THEN90
33 PRINT"*****THIS IS THE HIGHEST YET!!!"
34 FORT=1TO2000:NEXT
35 PRINT"*****BEST GUNFIGHTER IS *****":HSK(1)
36 PRINT"*****WITH A SCORE OF *****":HSK(1)
37 FORT=1TO2000:NEXT:IFT=2THENRETURN
38 GOTO20
39 POKEV+21,0:PRINT"*****":H=2:GOSUB300:GOSUB800
40 PRINT"*****ANOTHER GO?"
41 PRINT"*****PRESS *F* FOR *YES*"
42 PRINT"*****PRESS *N* FOR *NO*"
43 GETH$=IFPEEK(56321)=239THENCLR:RESTORE:RUN
44 IFR="N"THENH=0
45 GOTO70
46
100 IFPEEK(2040)=202THENH=203:GOTO102
101 S=202
102 POKE2040,S:RETURN
103 IFPEEK(2040)=209THENH=201:GOTO106
104 S=209
105 POKE2040,S:RETURN
106 IFK=1THENH=0
107 POKEV+30,0:IFPEEK(2040)=207THENH=206:S=205:GOTO116
108 IFPEEK(2040)=205THENH=204:S=0
109 POKE2040,3:IFB=205THENGOTO124
110 POKEV+3,V+1:GOSUB510:FORD=150TOBSTEP=4:POKEV+2,D
111 IFPEEK(V+30)AND4=4THEN150
112 NEXT:POKE2040,205:GOTO60
113 POKEV+2,V+1:GOSUB510:FORD=150TOBSTEP=4
114 IFPEEK(V+30)AND4=4THEN150
115 POKEV+16,(H+2):FORD=20TOBSTEP=4
116 IFPEEK(V+30)AND4=4THEN150
117 POKEV+2,D:NEXT:HL=0:HL=PEEK(V+16)
118 POKEV+16,(H+2):FORD=20TOBSTEP=4
119 IFPEEK(V+30)AND4=4THEN150
120 POKEV+2,D:NEXT
121 POKEV+16,0:POKEV+2,0:POKE2040,207:GOTO50
122 GOSUB520:SC=SC+100:FOROT=0TO15:GOSUB522
123 POKEV+41,T:NEXT:POKEV+41,2
124 GOSUB550
125 POKEV+2,K:POKEV+16,0:POKEV+21,3:GOSUB600
126 GOTO60
200 POKES320,0:POKE53201,2
202 PRINT"*****HERE IS.....":RETURN
204 PRINT"*****":POKE53201,0
205 PRINT"*****"
206 PRINT"*****"

```


3011 DATR0,0,0,0,169,0,0
 3012 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,116
 3013 DATR0,0,252,0,0,220,0
 3014 DATR0,48,0,1,169,0,5
 3015 DATR169,64,20,168,80,40,169
 3016 DATR48,0,168,0,0,168,0
 3017 DATR0,84,0,0,84,0,1
 3018 DATR60,0,1,4,0,2,4
 3019 DATR0,10,0,0,0,10,0
 3020 REM COMBOY BACK #1
 3021 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3022 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,168
 3023 DATR0,0,168,0,0,236,0
 3024 DATR0,48,0,1,169,0,5
 3025 DATR169,64,20,168,80,40,169
 3026 DATR48,0,168,0,0,168,0
 3027 DATR0,84,0,0,84,0,1
 3028 DATR60,0,0,65,0,0,65
 3029 DATR0,0,130,128,2,128,0
 3030 REM COMBOY BACK #2
 3031 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3032 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,168
 3033 DATR0,0,168,0,0,236,0
 3034 DATR0,48,0,1,169,0,5
 3035 DATR169,64,20,168,80,40,169
 3036 DATR48,0,168,0,0,168,0
 3037 DATR0,84,0,0,84,0,1
 3038 DATR60,0,1,4,0,2,4
 3039 DATR0,10,0,0,0,10,0
 3040 REM COMBOY LEFT #1
 3041 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3042 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,124
 3043 DATR0,0,252,0,0,124,0
 3044 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3045 DATR152,0,20,80,0,13,104
 3046 DATR0,0,168,0,0,168,0
 3047 DATR0,84,0,0,20,0,0
 3048 DATR20,0,0,4,0,0,4
 3049 DATR0,0,0,0,0,40,0
 3050 REM COMBOY LEFT #2
 3051 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3052 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,124
 3053 DATR0,0,252,0,0,124,0
 3054 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3055 DATR152,0,20,80,0,13,88
 3056 DATR0,0,168,0,0,168,0
 3057 DATR0,84,0,0,20,0,0
 3058 DATR20,0,0,4,0,0,4
 3059 DATR0,0,0,0,0,40,0
 3060 REM COMBOY RIGHT #1

3061 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3062 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,244
 3063 DATR0,0,252,0,0,244,0
 3064 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3065 DATR152,0,0,148,80,0,165
 3066 DATR152,0,168,0,0,0,168,0
 3067 DATR0,84,0,0,80,0,0
 3068 DATR0,0,0,64,0,0,64
 3069 DATR0,0,128,0,0,168,0
 3070 REM COMBOY RIGHT #2
 3071 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3072 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,244
 3073 DATR0,0,252,0,0,244,0
 3074 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3075 DATR152,0,0,152,0,0,153
 3076 DATR64,0,151,0,0,150,0
 3077 DATR0,84,0,0,80,0,0
 3078 DATR0,0,0,64,0,0,64
 3079 DATR0,0,128,0,0,168,0
 3080 REM COMBOY DEAD
 3081 DATR0,0,0,0,0,0,0
 3082 DATR0,0,0,0,0,0,0
 3083 DATR0,0,0,0,0,0,0
 3084 DATR0,168,0,0,168,0,10
 3085 DATR170,128,0,116,0,48,252
 3086 DATR48,20,220,80,5,49,64
 3087 DATR1,168,0,10,168,0,0
 3088 DATR168,0,168,0,0,168
 3089 DATR0,128,0,4,169,55,104
 3090 REM INDIAN RIGHT
 3091 DATR0,152,0,0,64,0,0
 3092 DATR64,0,168,0,0,244
 3093 DATR0,0,252,0,0,244,0
 3094 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3095 DATR152,0,0,152,0,0,152
 3096 DATR0,0,184,0,0,168,0
 3097 DATR0,84,0,0,80,0,0
 3098 DATR0,0,64,0,0,64
 3099 DATR0,0,128,0,0,168,0
 3100 REM INDIAN LEFT
 3101 DATR0,12,0,0,0,4,0,0
 3102 DATR4,0,0,168,0,0,124
 3103 DATR0,0,252,0,0,124,0
 3104 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3105 DATR152,0,0,152,0,0,152
 3106 DATR0,0,184,0,0,168,0
 3107 DATR0,84,0,0,20,0,0
 3108 DATR20,0,0,4,0,0,4
 3109 DATR0,0,0,0,0,40,0
 3110

3111 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3112 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,116
 3113 DATR0,0,252,0,0,220,0
 3114 DATR0,48,0,1,169,0,5
 3115 DATR169,64,20,168,80,40,169
 3116 DATR48,0,168,0,0,168,0
 3117 DATR0,84,0,0,84,0,1
 3118 DATR60,0,1,4,0,2,4
 3119 DATR0,10,0,0,0,10,0
 3120 REM COMBOY BACK #1
 3121 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3122 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,168
 3123 DATR0,0,168,0,0,236,0
 3124 DATR0,48,0,1,169,0,5
 3125 DATR169,64,20,168,80,40,169
 3126 DATR48,0,168,0,0,168,0
 3127 DATR0,84,0,0,84,0,1
 3128 DATR60,0,0,65,0,0,65
 3129 DATR0,0,130,128,2,128,0
 3130 REM COMBOY BACK #2
 3131 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3132 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,168
 3133 DATR0,0,168,0,0,236,0
 3134 DATR0,48,0,1,169,0,5
 3135 DATR169,64,20,168,80,40,169
 3136 DATR48,0,168,0,0,168,0
 3137 DATR0,84,0,0,84,0,1
 3138 DATR60,0,1,4,0,2,4
 3139 DATR0,10,0,0,0,10,0
 3140 REM COMBOY LEFT #1
 3141 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3142 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,124
 3143 DATR0,0,252,0,0,124,0
 3144 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3145 DATR152,0,20,80,0,13,104
 3146 DATR0,0,168,0,0,168,0
 3147 DATR0,84,0,0,20,0,0
 3148 DATR20,0,0,4,0,0,4
 3149 DATR0,0,0,0,0,40,0
 3150 REM COMBOY LEFT #2
 3151 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3152 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,124
 3153 DATR0,0,252,0,0,124,0
 3154 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3155 DATR152,0,20,80,0,13,88
 3156 DATR0,0,168,0,0,168,0
 3157 DATR0,84,0,0,20,0,0
 3158 DATR20,0,0,4,0,0,4
 3159 DATR0,0,0,0,0,40,0
 3160 REM COMBOY RIGHT #1

3161 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3162 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,244
 3163 DATR0,0,252,0,0,244,0
 3164 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3165 DATR152,0,0,148,80,0,165
 3166 DATR152,0,168,0,0,0,168,0
 3167 DATR0,84,0,0,80,0,0
 3168 DATR0,0,0,64,0,0,64
 3169 DATR0,0,128,0,0,168,0
 3170 REM COMBOY RIGHT #2
 3171 DATR0,0,0,0,168,0,0
 3172 DATR168,0,10,170,128,0,244
 3173 DATR0,0,252,0,0,244,0
 3174 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3175 DATR152,0,0,152,0,0,153
 3176 DATR64,0,151,0,0,150,0
 3177 DATR0,84,0,0,80,0,0
 3178 DATR0,0,0,64,0,0,64
 3179 DATR0,0,128,0,0,168,0
 3180 REM COMBOY DEAD
 3181 DATR0,0,0,0,0,0,0
 3182 DATR0,0,0,0,0,0,0
 3183 DATR0,0,0,0,0,0,0
 3184 DATR0,168,0,0,168,0,10
 3185 DATR170,128,0,116,0,48,252
 3186 DATR48,20,220,80,5,49,64
 3187 DATR1,168,0,10,168,0,0
 3188 DATR168,0,168,0,0,168
 3189 DATR0,128,0,4,169,55,104
 3190 REM INDIAN RIGHT
 3191 DATR0,152,0,0,64,0,0
 3192 DATR64,0,168,0,0,244
 3193 DATR0,0,252,0,0,244,0
 3194 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3195 DATR152,0,0,152,0,0,152
 3196 DATR0,0,184,0,0,168,0
 3197 DATR0,84,0,0,80,0,0
 3198 DATR0,0,64,0,0,64
 3199 DATR0,0,128,0,0,168,0
 3200 REM INDIAN LEFT
 3201 DATR0,12,0,0,0,4,0,0
 3202 DATR4,0,0,168,0,0,124
 3203 DATR0,0,252,0,0,124,0
 3204 DATR0,48,0,0,168,0,0
 3205 DATR152,0,0,152,0,0,152
 3206 DATR0,0,184,0,0,168,0
 3207 DATR0,84,0,0,20,0,0
 3208 DATR20,0,0,4,0,0,4
 3209 DATR0,0,0,0,0,40,0
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PALETTE

by Nic Ford

This week, the instructions for using the Palette facility installed by last week's code, plus a demo program showing off its major features – remember, the demo program won't run unless you have the code already installed.

As has been said, comments are accessed through the *Print* statement. In the following descriptions three dots ("...") represent any other part of the *Print* statement. This can be a string or number to be printed, a print specifier (;, or ') or even another palette command. The descriptions use *n, m, x, y* and *z* as variables. These can be straight numbers. Basic variables or complex mathematical expressions. *x* represents a pen number, and must hold a value between 0 and 15. *y* and *z* are colour numbers, and must lie between 0 and 7. The values of *n* and *m* may vary, and will be noted in the text.

Print ...; Paper *x*; ... Sets the current paper to the colour from pen *x*.

Print ...; Ink *x*; ... As above for ink.

Print ...; Ink *x*, *y*; ... Sets pen *x* to hold colour *y*. Anything printed after this in *Ink x* or *Paper x* will have colour *y*.

Anything on screen printed from pen *x* will change to colour *y*.

Print ...; Ink *x*, *y*, *z*; ... Sets pen *x* to flash between colour *y* and colour *z*. The speed of this flash depends on the flash rate.

Print ...; Flash *n*, *m*; ... Sets the flash rate. Any pen set up by *Print ...; Ink *x*, *y*, *z*;* ... will spend *n* fiftieths of a second in colour *y* and then *m* fiftieths in colour *z*. (Warning: 0 is counted as 256. *Print ...; Flash 1, 1;* ... is a very fast flash, which can be painful to the eyes and can slow program execution down appreciably.)

The palette can also work for graphics commands. Unfortunately these must also be accessed through the *Print* command. Care has been taken to use combinations of characters not normally used.

Print ...; "P", *n*, *m*; ... Works the same way as *Plot n, m*

Print ...; "D", *n*, *m*; ... Works the same way as *Draw n, m*

Print ...; "M", *n*, *m*; ... A "Move" command. As ...; "P", *n*, *m*; ... but the screen is not marked in any way.

If *Attr (n, m)* is used in a program when

using the palette it will give a number representing the logical colours on screen at position *n*, *m* at the current time. To find what pens were used to produce this colour a function must be defined thus: $1 \text{ Def Fn } p(n, m) = \text{Peek}(n*32 + m + E3232)$.

This will give a value with the binary form P P P P I I I I. P P P P is the number 0-15 of the *Paper* pen for that position. I I I I is a similar number for the *Ink* pen.

The demo program is a quick demonstration of the palette's abilities. It makes use of all of the new commands and shows their syntax in a practical way. It also uses two extra commands – *Print ...; CHR\$*; ... and *Print ...; Chr\$*; ... *Chr\$* clears the screen and also updates the new attributes file, which *Cls* does not do. *Chr\$* scrolls and updates, and should be used in preference to the normal "scroll?" routine, as this can leave strange colour combinations on the screen.

If you feel you cannot type in all that hex, the author can provide a copy of the program. Send a cheque for £3 to: Nic Ford, 25 Canada Road, Cobham, Surrey, KT11 2BB.

Listing 3: Spectrum Palette Demo Program

```

10 CLEAR 63231: LOAD "PALETTE"CODE : RANDOMIZE USR 64257
20 REM Delete line 10 if already loaded.
30 BORDER 0: PRINT CHR$ 0: REM clear screen
40 FOR f=0 TO 7: PRINT INK f, f: INK f+8, f: NEXT f
50 REM Set colours
60 FOR f=1 TO 15: PRINT TAB 7: INK f:"Ink "
70 PRINT " " AND f{10:f}:" on paper 0": NEXT f
80 REM Use all pens
90 FOR f=0 TO 7: PRINT INK f+8, f, 7-f: NEXT f
100 REM Set pens 8-15 flashing
110 FOR f=50 TO 25 STEP -5: PRINT FLASH f, f: PAUSE f: NEXT f
120 FOR f=25 TO 1 STEP -1: PRINT FLASH f, f: PAUSE 2*f: NEXT f
130 REM Use flash.
140 PAUSE 50
150 FOR f=1 TO 30: PRINT PAPER f-INT (f/16)*16:CHR$ 1: NEXT f
160 REM Scroll off
170 PRINT PAPER 0:CHR$ 0:
180 REM CIs again
190 PRINT INK 4, 4: INK 6, 6:
200 REM Set pens 4 and 6
210 FOR f=0 TO 175 STEP 5
220 PRINT INK 4: "M", f*1.4, 0: "D", 255-f*1.4, f:
230 PRINT INK 6: "P", 0, f: "D", f*1.4, 175-f:
240 NEXT f: REM Demonstrate graphics commands
250 PRINT FLASH 50, 50: INK 0, 2, 0:
260 FOR f=20 TO 1 STEP -1: PRINT FLASH f, 1: PAUSE 2*f+2: NEXT f
270 REM Flash again
280 PAUSE 0: PRINT FLASH 0, 0: INK 0, 0: STOP

```


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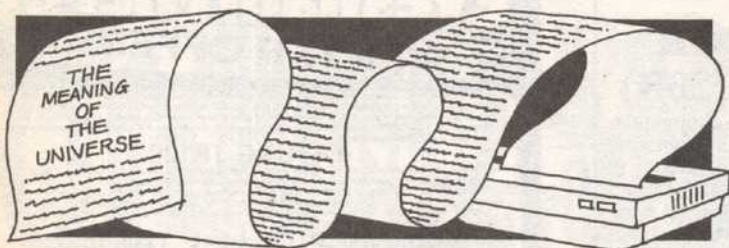
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RAINBOW

by Cy Noble

This week, the first part of the main program, plus the start of the detailed instructions. There are three basic modes of operation, the first of which is simply called Free Draw mode.

In this mode you move the special cursor around and if you hold down the fire button a line in the current colour will follow the cursor. (In all instructions that follow any reference to 'fire' refers to the CTRL key if using the cursor keys). At all times, the top two lines of the screen display the current option in the current colour and the X, Y coordinates, if the cursor keys are being used. If the current colour is Black then the top line will be in flashing White.

<A> selects the Alphabetic mode. This will print the standard printable characters at the screen cursor position, in whatever colour is current.

Shapes mode can only be entered from the Free Draw mode by hitting the letter corresponding to the shape required. Once in this mode it can only be exited by hitting <E>xit.

Shapes available are Line, Triangle,

Rectangle and Circle, <L>, <T>, <R> and <C> respectively. Once a shape is selected you are asked if you want a "Solid shape" (Y/N)". This means the shape will be completely coloured in the current colour if you hit <Y> or just in outline if you hit <N>. Once an option is selected the program stays on that option until <E> is hit, whereupon you will be back in Free Draw mode.

With each of the shape options you move the cursor to the position required and hit fire. At this point the cursor will be replaced by a flickering dot but as you move the joystick a flashing line will follow your movement. This line marks the position of the coloured line that will appear when you hit fire again, if you had selected <L> (line). The same procedure applies to <C>ircle except that the line will be the (invisible) diameter of the circle drawn with the mid point of the line being the centre. The line can be at any angle so you can place circles exactly where you want.

Filling blank areas - <TAB> will select the fill option from both the Free Draw and Shape modes. Hitting <TAB>

refreshes the fill colour blocks on the bottom two lines of the screen. You move the cursor to the colour required and hit fire to capture it. In the bottom right will be the colour currently under the cursor and you can select another colour from anywhere on the screen where there is colour. In the interests of a speedy fill (and also because of memory requirements) this fill routine will not fill all of the more complex blank areas unless they are simple convex shapes. Bear in mind that the fill starts at the cursor, fills a line of pixels to the right (until it reaches a coloured spot) then similarly going left and then up a line and repeat until it hits a non-blank pixel above the cursor position. Then down in the same manner.

You may find it impossible to fill some very small areas which are only one or two pixels wide, but with such, it is possible to use the <L>ine or Free Draw option to finish it.

More next week, then. Meanwhile, for the faint at heart, I'm supplying the program on various formats - write to me at the address in the listing. Cassette (£10), 5 1/4" Disc (£11.50) or 3" Disc (£15).

```
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40REM London N13 5JH
50NORC:ORCALL:ESC:BD:0290
60HIFHE=62FFF
70CMA=AX:MI:EE=BX:COL1=CX:COL2=DX
80CCH1=EX:CH2=FX:GETPOS=GX
90GETPI=HX:SHOW=IX:ONCE=JX
100CSTOR=IX:GATOR=L:IPICOL=IX
110IS1=MX:BUTTON=OZ
120ISX=CX:ISY=RY:SPC=44C:FI1L=TX
130CLES=UX:FI=XZ:COL1=XZ:GATO
140COL2=7CSTOR:COLOR2=COL1
150COL3=CHX12="This colour:GCOL"
160FRES=CHR12="Free draw:"
170*FX18
180*FX4,2
190*FX12,128
200*FX13,149
210*FX14,2
220IX=TRUE:VDU12,31,0,10:PRINT"Current
option is JOYSTICK: Okay (Y/N)":*FX21,0
230REPEAT:IX=INSTR("NhyY",GET$):UNTIL:IX
X>
240IFIX>2:60T0270 ELSE IX=FALSE:CLS
250PRINT"J" toggles between Joystick
& Cursors""When using cursors CTRL="
fire""in screen instructions""Hold
down <CTRL> to draw lines""(hold down
<SHIFT> to move quickly)""<SPACE> to c
ontinue":IX=640:YX=512
260REPEATUNTILGET=32
270*FX21,0
280MDE2:VDU25,0,10,96,0,0,0,0
290PROCW:VDU25,0,10,96,0,0,0,0
300CALL CMA
310SPGCOL=0:GCOLX=0:FREEZ=TRUE
320PROCFLAG
330FREEZ=TRUE:SPFLAG=FALSE
340PROCKEYS
350IF INKEY(-37) PROCshape(1):REM L
360IF INKEY(-86) PROCshape(3):REM T
370IF INKEY(-93) PROCshape(5):REM C
```

```
380IF INKEY(-52) PROCshape(7):REM R
390IF INKEY(-68) PROCfinish:REM F
400PROCJS
410IF FX=TRUE DRAWX,YZ
420IF FX=FALSE PROCplot(XZ,YZ)
430G010330
440END
450DEFPROC:VDU25,0,10,96,0,0,0,0
460VDU26,28,0,1,19,0
470VDU24,0,0,1279,1023;
480ENDPROC
490DEFPROC:VDU25,0,10,96,0,0,0,0
500IF FX=FALSE PROCshape:ENDPROC
510CALL ISH
520REM XZ=7:ISX=256*(ISX+1)
530REM YZ=7:ISY=256*(ISY+1)
540IF *button>0 FX=TRUE
550PROCsetvals
560ENDPROC
570DEFPROCsetvals
580IF XZ:1279 XZ=1279
590IF YZ:959 YZ=959
600IF XZ=0 XZ=0
610IF YZ=0 YZ=0
620IF IX THEN660
630VDU4,23,1,0,0,0,0,0,31,0,1
640PRINT"X=XZ: Y=YZ:"
650VDU30,23,0,10,96,0,0,0,0
660VZ=XZ/16
670VZ=YZ/4-255:WZ=ABS(WZ)
680ENDPROC
690DEFPROCcursor:QUICKZ=0:FX=FALSE
700IF INKEY(-2) FX=TRUE
710IF INKEY(-1) QUICKZ=16
720IF INKEY(-58) YZ=YZ+4-QUICKZ
730IF INKEY(-42) YZ=YZ-4-QUICKZ
740IF INKEY(-122) XZ=XZ+QUICKZ
750IF INKEY(-26) XZ=XZ-8-QUICKZ
760PROCsetvals
770ENDPROC
780DEFPROCalpha:LOCALB:VDU12,7
790PRINT"Letters (Fire ends)":*FX21,0
800REPEAT:PROCJS:PROCplot(XZ,YZ)
810VDU6=INKEY$(5)
820IF B=" " MOVEXZ-16,YZ+16:PRINTG:VD
```

```
U7
830UNTIL:IX=TRUE:VDU4,7:FX=FALSE
840MOVEXZ,YZ:PROCflag:ENDPROC
850DEFPROCfill:VDU7,12
860CALLCMA:SPC=17*(SPC+3)-1:*FX21,0
870PRINT"Cursor to colours:"Press fir
e:
880REPEAT:PROCJS:PROCplot(XZ,YZ)
890CALLgetpos:CALLgetpi:CALLshow
900UNTIL:FX=TRUE:FX=FALSE:*SPC=1
910*FX14,4
920*FX18,0,80
930*FX13,4
940PRINT"Cursor to fill area:Press fir
e:
950PROCfill:PROCflag:(SPC+1)=7CCH1:(?
SPC+2)=7CCH2:ENDPROC
960DEFPROCplot(XZ,YZ)
970VDU26,28,0,24,19,0:VDUS:*FX21,0
980COL4,1COL3:FORNZ=0TO1:*FX19
990VDU4,16,YZ+16
1000VDU24B:NE1
1010PROCW:VDU25,0,10,96,0,0,0,0
1020VDU4:MOVEXZ,YZ
1030ENDPROC
1040DEFPROCsave:LOCALIX,12X,name$
1050CL:PRINT"Save Load or Quit ?":*FX2
1,0
1060REPEAT:IX=INSTR("SallDq",GET$)
1070UNTIL:IX=0:IF IX=4 THEN170
1080INPU"Filename":name$
1090IF LEN(name$)>7 NAME=LEFT$(name$,7)
1100IF IX<3 OP=SAVE" ELSE OP=LOAD"
1110NAME=OP+name$
1120PRINTname$ OK? Y/N":*FX21,0
1130REPEAT:IX=INSTR("NhyY",GET$)
1140UNTIL:IX=0:IF IX<3 THEN170
1150IF IX<3 name=name$+" 3500 7800"
1160CALL name$
1170PROCflag
1180ENDPROC
1190DEFPROCshape(SZ):VDU7,12
1200*flagZ=TRUE:FREEZ=FALSE
1210LOCAL X1Z,Y1Z,seZ,X2Z,Y2Z
1220IF X2Z=1 THEN1260
```



```

1230PRINI:Solid shapes 7 Y/N:*=FX21,0
1240REPEAT:INSTR("Nnyy",GET#)
1250UNTIL TLTO:IF C<3 s%#E-1
1260F%#FALSE:PROCdot1:=FX21,0
1270IF s%#2 OR s%#3 s%#2 ELSE s%#2
1280shapes=CHR$(248+s%)+>> point:fire
* "SIR"(s%):PRINI:shapes
1290PROCplot:PROCdotpoint(s%)
1300IF s%#flag%#TRUE THEN 1290
1310F%#FALSE:free%#TRUE:PROCplot
1320ENDPROC
1330DEFPROCdotpoint(x%):LOCAL x1,y1,z
1340REPEAT:PROCdot:=FX21,0
1350UNTIL F%#TRUE OR s%#flag%#FALSE
1370IF s%#flag%#FALSE ENDPROC
1380:z%#x1%:y1%#x%:F%#FALSE
1390PROCdot1
1400END first point fixed
1410IF s%#5 PROCdot(x1,y1,z%):ENDPROC
1420END qet.2nd pt.
1430REPEAT:PROCdot:=FORM%#OT01:FX19
1440PLOT4,x1,y1,z%:PLOT6,x%,Y%:FX19
1450NEXT
1460UNTIL F%#TRUE:F%#FALSE
1470IF s%#1 PLOT4,x1,z%,y1,z%:PLOT5,x%,Y%:END
PROC
1480END 2nd pt. failed if not triangle
1490END first thro next line
1500IF s%#4 PROCtri(x1,y1,z%):ENDPROC
1510PROCcircle(x1,y1,z%)
1520ENDPROC
1530DEFPROCtri(x1,y1,z%)
1540END third point to get
1550LOCAL x2,y2,z2,x3,y3,z3
1560z2%#x1%:y2%#y1%:z3%#x1%
1570REPEAT:PROCdot:=FORM%#OT01
1580PLOT4,x1,y1,z%:PLOT6,x%,Y%:FX19
1590NEXT
1600UNTIL F%#TRUE:s%#x%:x%#x%:y%#y%
1610PLOT4,x1,y1,z%
1620IF s%#2 PLOT5,x2,y2,z%:PLOT5,x3,y3,z%
1630IF s%#3 PLOT5,x2,y2,z%:PLOT5,x3,y3,z%
1640ENDPROC
1650:
1660DEFPROCdot(x1,y1,z%)
1670LOCAL x2,y2,z2,x3,y3,z3
1680REPEAT:PROCdot
1690:z%#x%:y%#y%:z%#z%:FORM%#OT01
1700PLOT4,x1,y1,z%:PLOT6,x%,Y%:FX19

```

```

y%#PLOT2,z%#x%:PLOT2,0,-y%#FX19
1710NEXT:UNTIL F%#TRUE:F%#FALSE
1720NEXT:UNTIL F%#TRUE:F%#FALSE
1730IF s%#6 PLOT1,x%,y%:PLOT1,0,-y%#PLOT
1,-s%#0:PLOT1,0,-y%#ENDPROC
1740IF s%#0 s%#-4 ELSE s%#-4
1750FOR c%#0 TO y% STEP s%:PLOT1,s%,0
:PLOT1,0,s%:PLOT1,0,-s%:NEXT
1760ENDPROC
1770:
1780DEFPROCdot1
1790IF s%#1 (70) j%#x% EOR -1:PROCdot1
:PROCdot1(assign#)
1800IF s%#1 (35) s%#flag%#FALSE
1810IF s%#1 (106) PROCdot1
1820IF s%#1 (90) CLG:?(s%+1)=?cch1:?(s
pc+2)=?cch2:CALL cmt:?(s%+1)=?cch
2=?(s%+2):CALL show:PROCdot1
1830IF s%#1 (97) PROCdot1
1840IF s%#1 (74) CALL fill
1850IF s%#1 (66) PROCdot1
1860IF s%#1 (51) PROCdot1
1870IF s%#1 (102) PROCdot1
1880IF s%#1 (101) PROCdot1:PROCdot1("
Bars")
1890IF s%#1 (82) PROCdot1:PROCdot1("S
pread")
1900IF s%#1 (55) PROCdot1:PROCdot1("O
pen pattern")
1910IF s%#1 (72) PROCdot1:PROCdot1("R
eset fill colour")
1920FX14,4
1930IF s%#1 (72) c%#x%:gcol%#x%
1940FX13,4
1950IF s%#1 (72) gcol%#x%:gcol%#x%:PRI
NTcol%:STR$(gcol%):",STR$(gcol%):PROCd
ot1:PROCdot1
1960IF s%#1 (72) gcol%#x%:gcol%#x%:PROCd
ot1:PROCdot1
1970IF s%#1 (72) CLS:PRINT"BLACK: CAREFUL
!" :PROCdot1:PROCdot1
1980ENDPROC
1990DEFPROCcircle(x1,y1,z%)
2000LOCAL x2,y2,z2,x3,y3,z3
2010a%#ABS(x2-x1)/2:IF x2%#x1% a%#a%#x1
ELSE a%#a%#x2
2020b%#ABS(y2-y1)/2:IF y2%#y1% b%#b%#y1
ELSE b%#b%#y2
2030c%#(SGN((ABS(x2-x1)-2)+ABS(y2-y1
)-2))/2
2040VDU29,a%#b%:IF c%#1 THEN 2070
2050MOVE-18,18:VDU5:IF s%#4 VDU252 ELSE
VDU253

```

```

2060VDU4:GO102160
2070MOVE:0
2080:PRINT"Flash ? (Y/N) :*=FX21,0
2090REPEAT
2100IF s%#4 PLOT5,x%,y%:GO102120
2110MOVE:0,PLOT5,x%,y%
2120:PRINT"Flash ? (Y/N) :*=FX21,0
2130:PRINT"Flash ? (Y/N) :*=FX21,0
2140:PRINT"Flash ? (Y/N) :*=FX21,0
2150UNTIL F%#TRUE:ENDPROC
2160VDU29,0:0
2170ENDPROC
2180DEFPROCdot1:LOCAL x1,y1,z
2190LOCAL PRINI:Flash ? (Y/N) :*=FX21,0
2200REPEAT:PROCdot:=FX21,0
2210IF s%#1 (35) PROCdot:=FX21,0
2220FX18
2230FX4,0
2240FX15,0
2250VDU26:CALL fi
2260ENDPROC
2270DEFPROCdot1(tell%):VDU12,7:FX21,0
2280REPEAT:PROCdot:=FX21,0
2290PROCdot1:PROCdot1
2300ENDPROC
2310DEFPROCdot1
2320IF s%#1 (35) PROCdot:=FX21,0
2330ENDPROC
2340DEFPROCdot1:VDU12:TIME=0
2350REPEAT:UNTIL TIME=100:VDU12:ENDPROC
2360DEFPROCdot1:VDU12:LOCAL x%
2370FOR g%#0 TO 104:IF s%#0 THEN 2390
2380GOTO 104,RND(7)
2390PLOT169,x%:RND(100),y%:RND(100)
2400PLOT169,x%:RND(100),y%:RND(100)
2410PLOT169,x%:RND(100),y%:RND(100)
2420PLOT169,x%:RND(100),y%:RND(100)
2430NEXT:ENDPROC
2440ENDPROC
2450DEFPROCdot1:PROCdot:=FX21,0
2460IF s%#1 (35) PROCdot:=FX21,0
2470IF s%#1 (35) PROCdot:=FX21,0
2480IF s%#1 (35) PROCdot:=FX21,0
2490DEFPROCdot1(a%)
2500IF s%#1 (35) PROCdot:=FX21,0
2510IF s%#1 (35) PROCdot:=FX21,0
2520IF s%#1 (35) PROCdot:=FX21,0
2530IF s%#1 (35) PROCdot:=FX21,0
2540IF s%#1 (35) PROCdot:=FX21,0
2550ENDPROC

```

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Early Viewdata

Computing networking is so frequently described as 'next year's big growth market', that it may surprise some of you to know that the first viewdata service was set up around ten years ago.

This week I'm going to step back from specialised areas, to take a more general look at the development of micro communications.

Viewdata was first considered as a possible information providing media in the early and mid 70s. Sam Fedida was the 'inventor' of Prestel, or Post Office Viewdata as it was known in the early days.

In a way Prestel was a mistake, being the result of a viewphone project, the aim of which was to enable television pictures to be sent over the phone lines, like some science-fiction films.

Fedida and his team discovered that the technology of the time was not advanced enough to send anything more than text and simple graphics. So it became Viewdata.

At that time the Post Office decided that the system was so cheap, and could provide so much information that every home would be able to have a viewdata receiver and it would be used regularly in place of a train time table, encyclopedia or just about any written information.

The Post Office was convinced enough to test the system using 'guinea pigs'. They supplied receivers to 50 people and ran a test of the system. Comparing today's Viewdata with the early Viewdata, is like comparing an Amiga with a ZX81, or an automatic rifle with a bow and arrow.

Early Viewdata was very limited, to keep the costs down; it was black and white, capital letters only and the display size was a limited 32 x 16. The data which could be sent consisted of the numbers one through to nine and zero, a hash and a phone.

Early Viewdata used a speed of 1200/75, and this is about the only thing which has survived 100% from early Viewdata.

The BBC and the IBA started to look into teletext (Ceefax and Oracle) at the same time as the Post Office looked into

Viewdata. They produced this non-interactive (data may be sent only one way) system, and in some ways it was better than Fedida's Viewdata; it used colour, had a screen size of 40 x 24 and could handle lower case characters. Also Teletext was 'free' to use; if your television was equipped to pick up the teletext service, which many TVs now are, then you did not have to pay to use the service.

The Post Office, was not surprisingly, interested in teletext and discovered that it would be cheaper to make a Viewdata receiver to teletext specifications, so colour, etc, became a part of Prestel.

A teletext character set was decided upon, which would contain all of the characters available to both teletext and Viewdata receivers.

This is the same as the characters set on the BBC B micro in Mode seven (also called teletext model). This set developed to include double height, graphic and flashing characters.

Sam Fedida's team decided on GEC computers; GEC 4000s were the original computers, GEC 4082s are the present computers and there are plans to develop a system with a mixture of GEC 5065s, GEC 4190 (32 bit) and the extremely powerful GEC 6300 series of computers. In the present system, each computer has about 384K Ram with 8 x 70M (1000K) hard discs to hold information: 560,000K in all.

The purpose of all this was to enable the computers to handle many calls quickly and respond almost instantaneously: 200 calls at one time with a response time of a maximum of two seconds, from receiving the data to acting on it.

Computers and multiplexers were set up around the country to enable as many people as possible to receive Prestel at the cost of a local call.

Slow menu

Prestel has been a great success, but in many ways it is not as successful as it was first believed it would be. It was predicted that by the end of 1980 there would be 100,000 users, but now, six years later in 1986 there are only about two thirds of that number.

One of the reasons for this is that Prestel with Micronet 800 (home computer section) costs over £60 a year plus phone calls. Many home users cannot afford this. Also ex-users of Prestel do not like the slow menu system for finding a page. To find a page you have to go through a menu, which takes you to another menu, followed by yet another menu and so it goes on.

A key word searching system for Prestel is said to be in the development stages and should be ready by the end of this year at the latest.

Recently home micro users have written software for their micros so that they can run their own systems like Prestel.

Running one of these is great fun; you get all the benefits of logging on without the cost of a phone call!

However, Bulletin Boards do cost a bit to set up - about £1000-£2000 - and consequently there are less than 200 in the UK.

The first BBs ran on Tandy TRS-80s, using TBBS software, and some on Ataris (FoReM boards in particular). Now just about any computer from a ZX Spectrum with microdrives, or a BBC B, to a TRS-80 with hard discs, can run a BB.

Static screen

Most BBs are not the same as Prestel and require the user to have different software. BBs are often monochrome and they transmit a line at a time on a scrolling screen, rather than a page at a time on a static screen, as with Prestel.

Now for this week's BB top 10.

Name	Baud rate/format	Number
1 Mailbox-80	300/300	051-428-8924
2 Bluelips	300/300	0843-32637
3 Marcell	300/300 & 1200/75	01-346-7150
4 CABB	300/300 & 1200/75	01-631-3076
5 Metrolite	1200/75 Viewdata	01941-4285
6 MicroGoose	1200/75 Viewdata	01-888-8894
7 BSCB	1200/75 Viewdata	0707-57477
8 CBBS - SW	300/300, 1200/75 & 1200/75 Viewdata	0282-5306
9 Vulcan Board	300/300 & 1200/75	0283-6669
10 Dark Crystal	300/300 & 1200/75	01-954-9847

You may wonder why I've dropped the CCCBB (Caine Computer Club Bulletin Board) from the list. It's gone because it is now a 'ring back board' and I've been unsuccessful in contacting it recently.

If I manage to get through again then you can be sure it will return.

Two new FBBS format BBs have appeared recently: firstly, Torture Chamber (I don't know why, but many FBBS BBs have weird names: Torture Chamber, Compost Heap, etc). Torture Chamber runs 24 hours a day and dual baud rate.

It's number is 021-455-1219 and the Sysop's name is Candalf Sorcerer (aren't they all?).

The second one is Malcom Systems, again 24 hours a day, dual baud rate. It's number is 01-458-9704 and the Sysop's are Malcom Carter and Danny Zargel.

Why not give them a try? One thing about FBBS is that it runs on a BBC, so there is often lots of stuff for BBC owners to download, particularly lots of digitised photographs.

David Wallin

If you have any queries, tips or comments to make about any aspect of micro communications, David Wallin would love to hear from you.

Write to him at *Popular Computing Weekly* 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2H 7PP.

Peek & Poke



Commodore Basic

Mark Thompson of Tullibody, in Scotland, writes:

Q Like many others, I've found the Commodore 64's V2 Basic a bit awkward to use. I've now purchased Simons Basic, which has made programming much easier.

However, after receiving a Commodore 64 1520 printer plotter as a present, I have found that the two Simons Basic commands *Copy* and *Hardcopy* would not work with my printer, and not even the two sample programs in the user manual would work.

Also my printer does not work with *Mini Office* I keep getting an I/O error 35 in the word processor pro-

gram. Can you help?

A The 1520 printer/plotter does not use the device number 4, which Simons Basic assumes you're using. To change the device number, look up page 37 of the *Commodore Programmers' Reference Guide* and all will be revealed.

As for *Mini Office*, I suggest you contact Database Publications itself: 68 Chester Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport (061 456 8383). Your program may be faulty.

Function keys

Mark Elliott, of Workington, in Cumbria, writes:

Q How do you program the function keys on the Commodore 64? In the user guide and the *Programmers' Reference Guide*, there is nothing on this subject.

A The Commodore function keys generate an ASCII code—that code can be looked up on the ASCII code table in the *Programmers' Reference Guide*. To include the function keys in a program, write a *Get AS* routine that looks for the code generated by the function keys.

Bad program

Alan Davies, of Llanelli, writes:

Q I have an Acorn Electron and I am having problems with *Bad Program* messages, when I try to recover a lot of programs, after pressing the *Break* key.

A You should not really use the *Break* key to interrupt a program; *Escape* is much better. *Break* actually causes a "partial system upset".

In order to recover a program after pressing *Break*, the command *Old* should be entered.

Loading problems

Troy Baines, of Blackpool, Lancs, writes:

Q I originally had a 16K Spectrum but expanded it with memory chips. Sometimes 48K programs load first time, but occasionally they only load second time.

Sometimes I have to put the cassette recorder down on a chair lower than the

computer, or programs won't even load the second time around!

A It sounds to me as if you have cassette recorder problems. Have you tried a different recorder? It could well be that it is static from the recorder or TV that is causing the problem.

Try keeping your leads separate, if you can. Try, particularly, to keep the TV aerial lead away from the cassette recorder leads.

Spectrum version

M. Sleight, of Doncaster, in South Yorks, writes:

Q I can only speak for the Spectrum version of *The Quill*, but I have found no trouble at all in loading a complete adventure into the interpreter.

All one needs to do is load *The Quill* and then proceed as if loading a database. The bytes are loaded as if they were the database.

I know it states on Page 26 of the manual that this is not possible, but it is.

A I've also tried this on the Spectrum and it does work. So I guess it's worth a try.

The Rogue Program





A masterpiece

Without doubt one of the very best games to have hit the Commodore (and there is a lot of competition for the honour) is Novogon's 3D vector masterpiece *Mercenary*. I was therefore delighted to receive pages full of tips on the game from Christopher Hester of Stockport. Chris writes, "Even though I've solved the game there still remains a lot to do - it's the only game I know that offers a challenge after completion. Here are my tips on how to finish:

"Firstly buy the ship offered at the start and fly over to location 11:13 where you'll find the entrance to a hanger. Use the elevator to descend. Go through the top east door into a green room where you'll find the cheese. This is a most important object as it is a cleverly disguised ship and is also the fastest. Go south until you have picked up the useful armament then back into the hanger. Leave your own ship behind the drop the cheese, then board it. You will now need to fly to each of the hangers and explore them for objects hidden in the rooms below. The beauty of the cheese is that you can pick it up, unlike your old ship, and hence take it with you.

"The hangers are all connected underground but in some devious ways. You will need to know firstly that in the underground rooms below each hanger are a variety of doors. The normal door is a rectangle and can be opened by walking straight up to it. However, there are a variety of shaped doors such as a triangular door which can only be used if you have a key which is the exact shape of the door. There are seven different keys to collect. The doors with a triangle on them are always dark - use a photon emitter to see in them.

"The door with two diagonals is the door to a transmission room which is always seen as a black room with coloured lines. Upon entering you will hear an eerie sound and you have been transmitted to another place on the map. Stepping out of the room shows you where. These doors are immensely complex as usually they alternate between two rooms - step back in and you'll be back where you started - however, some rooms act as transmission

points for several different rooms depending on where you've come from. It is a good idea to try and follow these doors as one of the hangers can only be reached (initially) by them.

"The doors with one diagonal across them serve also as transmission rooms, but they are one way only. The ones with a line from the top right corner to the bottom left are the entrances and work like the normal transmission rooms. However, they lead to doors the opposite way round and with a diagonal from top left. These are exits only and if entered they do nothing.

"The doors with a skull and cross-bones are Risk doors - usually they are a trap, but one is the entrance to a hanger. Always save your position before attempting to enter one.

"The doors with an arrow pointing up or down are lifts and can only be found in the colony craft that orbits above the city

however - more on this later.

"In the colony craft you will find a five sided key - this is very useful as, if you have all the other keys, you will never need to fly up to the craft again. The key will give you access to a series of rooms below the city including several transmission rooms. One of these takes you straight to the colony craft, therefore saving you a lot of time and effort.

"The reverse facility is also provided. The door in the laboratory of the craft which has a skull and cross-bones on it leads back down to the city.

"The pass enables you to enter the hanger at 3:15 from above, but it is found next to the hanger so you have to use the transmission room first to get it.

"These are the hangers: Blue 3:00. Yellow 3:15 (need pass to enter). Brown 9:05. Red 9:06. Orange 11:13. Yellow 81:35. Grey **:*.

"The last two hangers are not mis-

Ship	Top Land Speed	Top Air Speed
8:08 Dominion Dart	1650	4950
3:00 Palyar Diamond	1650	1650
**:* Jet	825	7400
11:13 Cheese	3300	9900
9:05 Land Dart	3837	—
12:13 Car	825	—
3:15 Intergalactic craft	—	Escape velocity

at 65,000 feet. The ship you start with cannot reach the colony craft which is seen as a dot in the sky from the ground but the cheese can easily fly up to it.

"The colony craft must be visited so that you can make use of several objects that are there. Upon entering certain rooms you will be asked to drop a certain object if you are carrying it and you will gain credits. When you have enough credits you can buy a ship that enables you to escape from the planet which is the object of the game. This isn't the only way to complete the game,

prints - their locations are *outside* the city in the wastelands. At first the last one is very difficult to reach as it is not even numbered - the location dial just shows asterisks. But don't worry, you can reach it from the other hanger underground.

"The intergalactic craft is the one for which the craft is needed. You can rent this craft, or just take it, but to make it work yourself you need the Novadrive. It is obvious from the list that the cheese is the best ship to use." We'll carry on with these tips next week.

Tony Kendle

Object name	Place to use or how to use
Poweramp	Boost speed of dominion craft
Catering provisions	Kitchens
Gold	Exchequer
Essential 12939 supply	Conference room
Mechanoid	Interview room
Medical supplies	Infirmary
Data bank	Control room
Winchester	Laboratory
Neutron fuel	Engine room
Antenna	Communications room
Energy crystal	Mechanoid power room
Large box	Stores
Photon emitter	This is a torch - use in dark rooms
Anti-time bomb	Stops you destroying buildings
Antigrav	Enables you to carry any object even ships that were previously too heavy
Sights	Give you sights
Metal detector	Shows which buildings belong to which race by colour and information panel. Blue = mechanoid. Green = Palyar. Red = free

Tony Bridge's Adventure Corner



Press reaction

It's been interesting to watch the reaction of the computer press to *Lord of The Rings* over the last few weeks – comments have ranged from the rather predictable “fan-mega-tastic, the greatest thing since *The Hobbit*” to total silence.

My initial reaction was “oh dear”, and I'm afraid that nothing that I've seen since has changed my mind – however, it's interesting to see the opinions of other adventurers.

I mentioned Linda Wright's *GAC'd* adventure recently: I've enjoyed playing it and found an eye to detail and some puzzles to warm the old adventurer's heart. Linda tells me that she has forwarded it to Incentive, so I hope that we can see it commercially available soon – I believe Linda has a great future as an adventure writer. But she also has some comments about *Lord of The Rings*:

“I loaded it enthusiastically, waited for what seemed ages, only to have it crash within minutes of starting. For example, under the high hedge, without a source of light and trying to go west, provokes half a message and then the necessity to reload. However, I do like the atmosphere, though the length of ‘thinking time’ required is niggling... and the pictures do little other than annoy. Why can't Melbourne House bring out games like those from Level 9 – I've never had trouble with games from the latter, and it's a shame, as Melbourne Houses' ideas are so good...”

Alan Davis, a valued reader and critic of the Elf's witterings but best known to

the world at large as the author of the fantastic *Runestone*, has several things to say:

“I was bowled over by this for the first few days of playing – the spirit of the book seems to have been captured so well, and it was so easy to identify with Frodo, Pippin, or whichever character was chosen. There's no doubting that this program (or programs) is a major achievement, and yet... slight doubts are creeping in.

“In one or two places in Part One, the game departs from the original, for example, on entering the barrow just east of Tom Bombadil's house, one finds oneself first in an underground shed and then in a room listening to ‘heavy orc music’, neither of which makes sense even in the context of the game and certainly not even remotely in keeping with the spirit of the book.

“The same is true of the ‘watery tart’ which appears in the lake when Merry goes for a swim.

“On the plus side, Part Two seems completely free of lapses of this sort and indeed there are moments when the player really seems to be ‘living’ the book. The exhilarating ride across the ford and the frenzied skirmish with the tentacle outside the Gate of Moria are obvious examples.

“The combat sequences are splendid – there's a feeling of real desperation when trying to fend off the band of Orcs by Balin's tomb.

Sight-seeing tour

“There's a feeling of real tragedy to be had, too. Taking the blizzard-torn pass through the mountains of Lothlorien, you find yourself almost in tears as your faithful companions keel over one by one, because you didn't get the fire going quickly enough...”

“Alas, Part Two is relatively easy to finish, and looking back, there does seem to be a dearth of actual things to do – it's really more of a sight-seeing tour. Somehow, I doubt that this is a game which can be played over and over again in the way that *The Hobbit* could. Maybe time will prove me wrong.”

Other readers have mentioned *LOR* – Hugh Walker (scourge of critics and a scourge of a critic) has, as usual, some very perceptive remarks to make, for example: “The ride to the Ford:

Glorfindel revealed (in retrospect) in all his glory as an Elf-Lord... where is it? Melbourne House couldn't find enough in the book and so has to add a monastery?” and more.

I have tried and tried over the past two or three months to get to

grips with *Lord of The Rings*, believe me, I desperately want to see in the adventure what I have been told by others actually exists – I've been told, for example, that “the atmosphere of the book has been captured extremely well” and that “the puzzles are enormously difficult and intriguing” and so on.

Poetry and pathos

But to me, this is all totally unfounded. In my review in *The Corner*, I said that “*LOR* is better than many adventures” but as I have been able to see more of the programs, I believe that this is far too generous.

The *Lord of The Rings* trilogy is the greatest work of fantasy ever put to paper – the combination of scholarship, dedication to detail and sheer breadth of imagination is breathtaking.

No adventure game could ever hope to come near to matching the poetry and pathos of Tolkien's work, and we shouldn't expect miracles of Melbourne House – but this is no excuse for foisting on the public such a badly conceived, badly programmed piece of rubbish as *Lord of The Rings*.

Why should we have to put up with glacial response times, and such awful puns as “heavy Orc music” – very funny, yes, but couldn't the programmers show some restraint?

The programs are inconsistent: at the start of part two, try going south, then west. Through the stone door, you'll find the Mithril shirt – but you could also go S,S,S,S,S, etc, then west and achieve exactly the same result. This is atmosphere?

No atmosphere

I have to admit that I was seduced at first by the lengthy location descriptions, but these do not make for atmosphere. Why should we have to put up with the stupid loading arrangements, which lead half the reviewers and much of the public to complain of “corrupted tapes” – why does my program *New* itself when I *Quit*.

Why do Melbourne House and Philip Mitchell seem to be unable to learn from the lessons of modern adventure programming – why is there no Ramsave as in many of the better modern games...?

Despite anything that I might say, the game immediately went to the top of the charts and will remain there for many months.

Of course, everybody will buy the thing, but the thought that gnaws away at the back of my mind is: “Never again will anyone, anywhere, have the chance of bringing Tolkien's beautifully-crafted work to the computer”.

Perhaps Melbourne House should take a look at Fergus McNeil's *Bored of The Rings* if they would like to see how a true enthusiast and brilliant programmer approaches the task.

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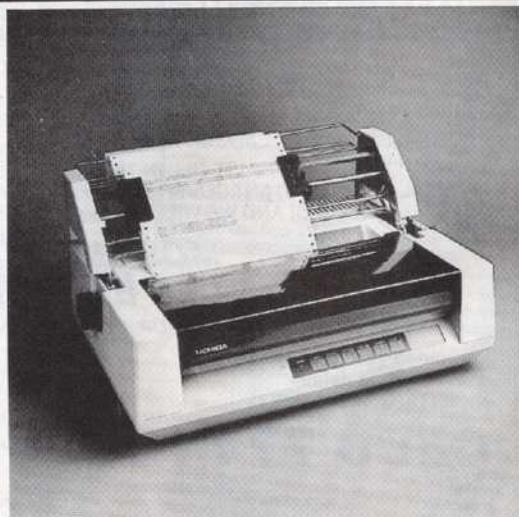
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RIGHT NOISES

Bonk... dit... bonk dit... bonk... dit bonk bonk bonk... Table tennis is like that - the noise of plastic against plywood can become hypnotic. *Ping Pong* from Imagine makes most of the right noises but I'm not sure it adds up to much of a game.

Ping Pong the computer game is an attempt to implement the classic 'duel between the Chinese and everybody else' on the home micro. I have some doubts about its effectiveness. The bat moves have been simplified to smash/backhand/forehand cut and drive, ie, the general position and height of the bat is controlled by the computer. Whilst this makes for an easier game in the earlier stages, it effectively limits the skill to guessing shot styles rather than quick positioning.

The graphics are fair, no actual players, which gives a

better view of the table - each side is represented only by a ghostly hand and bat suspended in mid air. At the first level it is possible to beat the computer quite easily by mixed cut and slam shots. Each point is greeted by a burst of noise from the crowd that sounds like seagulls screeching - perhaps it's because the crowd, depicted on-screen, consists of monkeys (don't ask me why; this game is licensed from a Japanese software company).

One additional criticism: between points you have to wait an awfully long time before the point is registered and you are ready to play on. It gets very irritating.

Not dross by any means and of interest to those already hooked on the real thing but I don't think it has all that much lasting addictiveness.

Program *Ping Pong*

Price £8.95

Micro Commodore 64

Supplier Imagine
6 Central Street
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FUMBLE

Superbowl... the glamour... the excitement... the NFL approval... the disappointment.

On loading, *Superbowl* offers one and two player options - and as the majority of owners spend most of the time playing one player, I tried that.

You then move to a 50/50 split screen, with a portion of

Pick of the week

HEAVY DUNGEON

Gargoyle Games may have cracked one of the most difficult markets of all with *Heavy on the Magick* - Dungeons and Dragons addicts. Whilst its popularity assumed that quite a few computer adventure games are derived from the D & D genre, in fact, none of them have really captured the scope, flexibility, imagination of the original format. Much less brought something new to it.

Heavy on the Magick is unlike any other computer game I've seen, though adventurers of every kind should have no problem becoming completely obsessed with it. Call it a graphically animated role-playing adventure.

This being a Gargoyle product things are not absolutely po-faced (thankfully). Indeed, the entire game is based around the premise that you, Axil, have committed one of the great magical faux pas of all time - telling dodgy stories about ace sorcerer Therion without realising he was listening.

You are banished to one of the most unpleasant dungeons ever - the stagnant pits beneath the tedious castle known as Collodon's Pile. You can bet your last pixie invocation that the dungeons are chock full of



some of the nastiest astral beings ever.

You are allotted, in true luck of the dice tradition, values for stamina, skill and luck. These values alter as you overcome obstacles, survive and do battle. The whole basis for the game is combat by spells - which come in various sorts, but where there is a visual result, eg, animating an inanimate object, it actually happens on screen.

Spells must be used with caution though. Get it wrong and you could find that you have produced some very nasty objects indeed.

Instructions are issued via single keypress commands or speaking directly to whomever or whatever you wish to question. Some



This Week

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Computer Hits 2	Arc	Amstrad	£9.95	Beau - Jolly	Teeth	Ed	BBC	£12.00	AVP Computing
Ping Pong	S	Amstrad	£8.95	Imagine	Chip Factory	Arc	C16	£6.95	Audiogetic
The Pawn	Ad	Atari St	£24.95	Rainbird	Fairlight	Ad	Commodore 64	£9.95	Softtek
Computer Hits 2	Arc	BBC	£9.95	Beau - Jolly	Computer Hits 2	Arc	Commodore 64	£9.95	Beau - Jolly
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					Ping Pong	S	Spectrum	£7.95	Imagine

New Releases

DATE

of the monsters are vaguely helpful and can offer advice. Early on in the game you'll meet the giant Apex who seems relatively harmless, unless, being large and clumsy, he happens to tread on your foot, at which point Axil leaps up and down in pain in one of the nicest sections of animation I've ever seen in any computer game.

The graphics are unusual, a sort of teletext level of resolution, but impressive nevertheless - the saving in memory achieved explains how Gargoyles have managed to get so many animated actions in such a large adventure (250 rooms).

Despite being trodden on by assorted monsters half a dozen times, *Magick* has me hooked. It has more genuinely original ideas than any game I've seen since *Knight Lore* and should sell by the lorry load. The game is released in mid April so start saving...

Program *Heavy on the Magick*
Price £9.95
Micro Spectrum
Supplier Gargoyles Games
 74 King Street
 Dudley
 West Midlands
 DY2 8QB

the playfield on the right, and a scoreboard/action replay command board on the left. The first thing that strikes you is that the playfield is very small indeed - with all 22 players represented as tiny pixels. Still...

The action is controlled via a series of neat menus, by which you can select authentic play options, both offensive and defensive, go through a play frame by frame, and select preferred receivers. And then the action starts - bang - what happened? Well, to get NFL approval, players have to move at realistic scale speeds - and when you're talking about a few pixels on screen, that's too fast. Still, you get used to that (almost) after a bit... and then you discover the problem. Tracking 22 players on screen is a time consuming business for a microprocessor. So it hasn't got time to be clever. So you can score from a rushing play about seven times out of ten - not so authentic.

An even jollier wheeze is to carry the ball around in circles, while the rest of the players run after you - again, not too realistic. The computer offense is easily beaten, when you've clocked up over one hundred, your score goes back to zero (I managed to lose, despite being 87 points ahead) - need I go on.

The two player game is acceptable, given strong reservations about the play area size and speed, but tell that to Spectrum and Amstrad owners with only one joystick port. For a game marketed with one and two player op-

tions, this is just not good enough.

Program *Superbowl*
Price £9.95
Micro Spectrum, CBM 64, Amstrad to follow
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HIDDEN TALENT

The PCW 8256 is, of course, a lot more than a word processor. It runs CP/M programs of any kind and by using the Ram disc can often run them a lot faster than almost any other CP/M machine. The other point is that it has a surprisingly high screen resolution and can do pretty nifty black and white graphics.

Proof of the potential of the PCW 8256 arrives in the form of *3D Clock Chess*, a superb chess program which features an edge-on view on the board, à la *Psion Chess* for the QL. The playing pieces

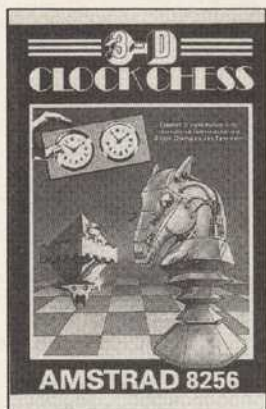
are as large and detailed. The program actually goes beyond *Psion Chess* by also featuring on screen timing of moves, displayed both as digital and analogue information, ie, two clock faces drawn in perspective, which tick away the time taken by each side. Most impressive.

In the end chess programs come down to playing ability - a difficult thing to assess without many weeks spent battling with it. All I can say is that with the machine set to five second moves and we in the office taking as long as we liked, it won hands down.

The display also indicated certain technical information about what moves the computer is considering, how 'deep' it is looking in its tree of moves, and how the computer rates its own position. There are options to get the computer to suggest a move and review previous moves if you wish.

The only criticism I can make of *3D Clock Chess* is that you can't take back moves you immediately regret and you can't cancel move instructions you start to type in, but realise are wrong - you have to type a complete illegal move instead. These are niggles though. The program is generally excellent and may come as a big surprise to those who assumed that the PCW 8256 is only a dull business machine.

Program *3D Clock Chess*
Price £19.95
Micro PCW 8256
Supplier CP Software
 15 Despard Road
 London N19 5NP



This Week

Datatypes Ut Spectrum £4.95 Mupados
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N Yorkshire, HG1 5JS. **CRL**, CRL House, 9 Kings yard, Carpenter's Road, London E15 2HD, 01-533 2918. **Imagine**, Imagine Software, 6 Central Street, Manchester M2 5NS. **Initiative Managers**, 96 Worcester Road, Malvern, Worcestershire WR14 1NY. **Mupados**, Unit 11, Llambed Industrial Estate, Tregaron Road, Lampeter, Dyfed SA48 8LT, 0570 422877. **Quicksilver**, Palmerston Park House, 13 Palmerston Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO1 1LL, 0703 20169. **Rainbird**, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London. **Soffek**, 12/13 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London.

Computing in schools

During a visit to an open evening at a local Middle school last year, I took the opportunity to ask one of its' governors about the extent to which microcomputers were being used in the school. His reply was not totally unexpected.

The school possessed two microcomputers, but, in his opinion, members of staff were not sufficiently competent in their use, nor was it particularly feasible sharing two machines between more than 400 pupils, so their incorporation into lessons was rare.

A small number of children were given time on them, after hours, in the school computing club, but, as all parents know from the teachers' dispute, extra-curricular activities in most schools have been curtailed for the past year, so pupils have had little or no instruction on the machines.

This particular situation can hardly be isolated, I am sure that there have been similar occurrences elsewhere in the country.

Where schools do have machines available, some pupils are able to learn programming and problem-solving techniques, especially where Logo is employed, but, unfortunately, schools like this are in the minority.

My local First school has recently purchased two microcomputers and hopes to add a third. At least one teacher has had specialist training in their operation and the machines are used as much as possible.

The children, who are aged between five years and eight years, are now familiar with microcomputers and enjoy using them.

I agree that, in their eyes, they are only playing games, but at that age, the playing of games is part of the learning process. Used this way, the microcomputer is a genuine teaching aid and I applaud the school and others like it for placing such importance in their use in

primary education.

Unfortunately, when children move on to Middle schools, the continuity is not always maintained; microcomputers are used haphazardly or not at all. Much of the good work started in the First school is undone.

Secondary schools do not help the situation either. Most of their microcomputers are concentrated in one area. Pupils rarely get the opportunity to use them until they are in the fourth year, and only then if they have been successful in obtaining a place on the appropriate CSE or GCE computing course.

If schoolchildren are to be kept well-informed, as they must be, then radical changes will have to take place in the educational system as we know it. A microcomputer should be as commonplace in the classroom as the blackboard is! I cannot think of any subject in the curriculum which would not benefit from it.

Learning about computers and their uses should be a continuous process from the First school onwards, so that, when they come to leave school, teenagers are as familiar with a microcomputer as they are with a pencil and paper.

Teenagers who have not had the opportunity to learn computing in class, have, up to now, been able to enrol at an ITEC centre upon leaving school. However, these centres have now had their funding reduced by the government, so, yet again, fewer places are available.

I feel that now is the time for industry to start sponsoring courses in Information Technology, up and down the country, both for their existing staff and for prospective employees. In this way, educational continuity will be maintained.

It is not enough for schools merely to have computers - they should be fully integrated into the school curriculum. The money must be found to train all teachers in their use - not just those in the computing department. To fail to find the money now will be the worst kind of waste for the future.

Keith Irving

Puzzle No 202

Portbury, Quenching, and Riddle are three villages connected by three perfectly straight roads, each road being an exact number of miles in length.

If I start at any of the three villages and travel to one of the others by the shortest route, the number of miles that I cover is a prime number. On the other hand, if I take the longer route - that is via the third village - the total mileage is just one mile more than a prime number. Furthermore, the total mileage of the round trip of all three villages is (perhaps not surprisingly) also prime!

Can you determine the smallest possible distances involved?

Solution to Puzzle No 197

The single gold sphere is 26 nubits in diameter. When recast, the four smaller spheres will measure 10, 14, 18, and 20 nubits in diameter.

As the ratio of the volumes of spheres is proportional to the cubes of their diameters, it is necessary to find sets of four integers, the sum of whose cubes is also a perfect cube.

```
10 FOR H=4 TO 24
20 FOR C=3 TO H-1
30 FOR B=2 TO C-1
40 FOR A=1 TO B-1
50 LET T=A*A*A+B*B*B+C*C*C+H*H*H
60 LET CR=T*(1/3)
70 IF ABS(CR-INT(CR))<1E-5 THEN PRINT A,B,C,H
80 NEXT A
90 NEXT B
100 NEXT C
110 LET H=H+1
120 GOTO 20
```

In the program 'H' is the largest of the smaller spheres, and 'C', 'B' and 'A', the other three. 'T' represents their total volume, and if the cube root of this is integral, the results are printed.

There are a number of sets of values that are printed, but it is necessary to find four sets that all produce the same total. The smallest total found is shown to be 26 - which must be the diameter of the original sphere (and the king's age). This can be split into spheres of: (2, 10, 14, and 24), (3, 15, 17, and 21), (5, 11, 19, and 21), or (10, 14, 18, and 20) units diameter.

Winner of Puzzle No 197

The winner is Nigel Parsons of Orchard Place, Cardiff, who will be receiving £10.

Rules

The closing date for Puzzle 202 is April 29.

The Hackers



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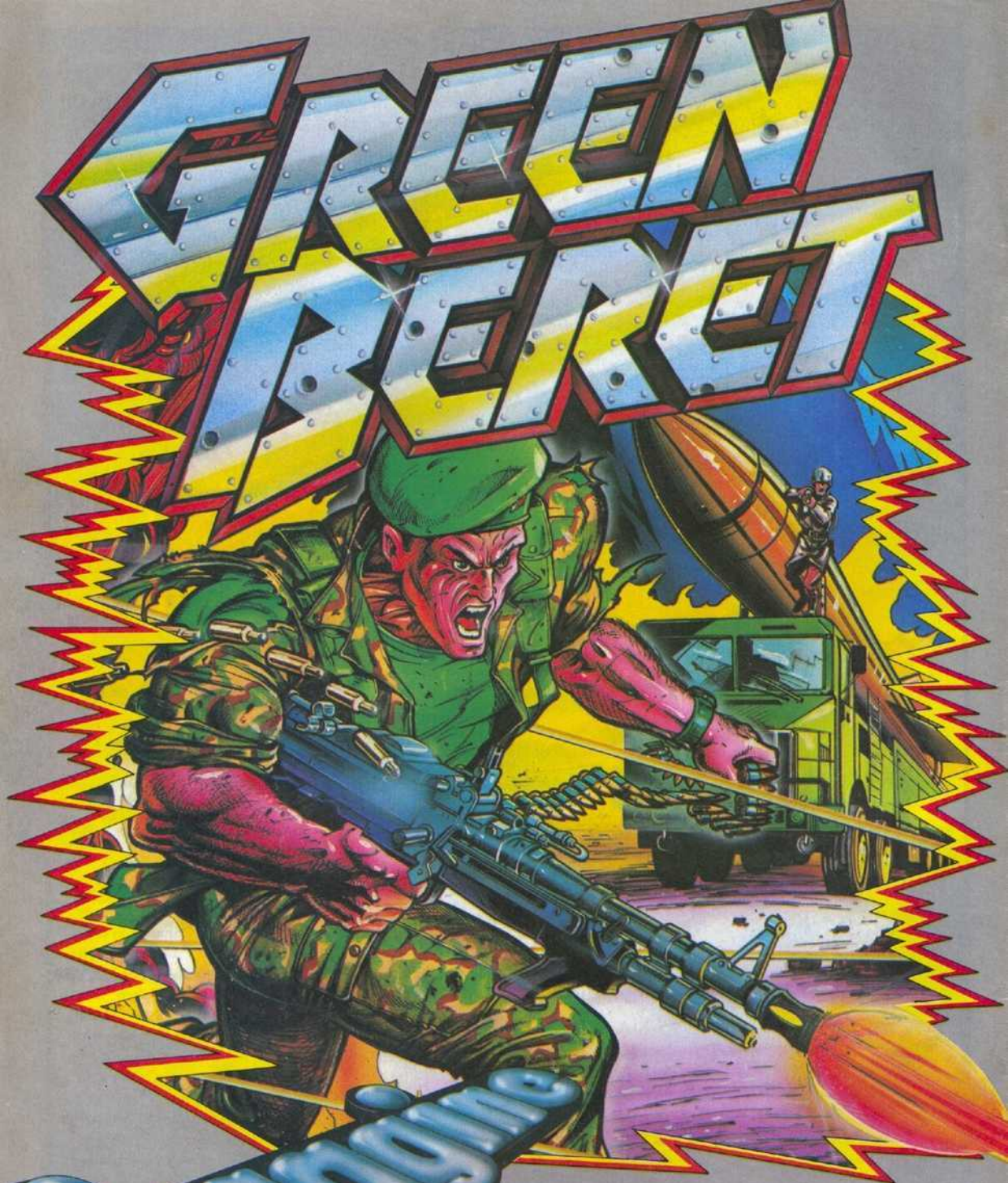
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